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The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

Frank B. Fagerburg:

SUBVERSIVE INACTIVITY

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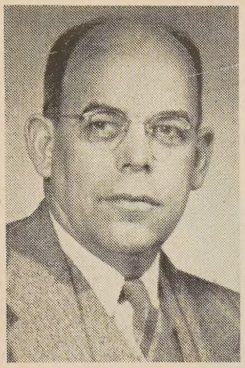

By Martin P. Schroedel

COST-OF-LIVING

SOMETHING has gone wrong in the household of faith! . . . Since the days of the deep depression I had been pastor of a parish in one of the low income areas of the United States. One of my hopes had been to find there some human material for the Christian ministry that could reflect the gospel from other than a middle-class viewpoint. Heroic efforts on the part of a family, the death of the father, the return of the son to take his place in the mine had been the only results.

And then the fifty G.I.'s of my parish returned home. With them they brought new educational privileges incorporated in the G.I. bill of rights. New hope rose within me. At last it was possible to help consecrated young men to find their way into the Christian ministry. Yet, despite previous commitments, my words were a voice crying in the wilderness. I marveled how these young men's fine Christian personalities had been preserved through the bitter conflict. Yet they seemed to sense something I would not admit. Within six months most of them were driving new postwar model cars in the $2,000 class, while their minister after so many years of hard service had to content himself with a rapidly deteriorating prewar model.

I understand it all now. Through moments of deep discouragement the realization has come. Something is wrong in the household of faith. Ambitious, energetic young men can see no purpose in subjecting themselves to pious exploitation. What if they did give themselves to the Christian ministry, if they surrendered their opportunities for financial gain to serve their Lord, if they gave themselves in service to their Christian brothers—would they be accepted in the spirit of Christian brotherhood? Or would they find themselves on the Christian labor market, seeking for the highest bidder? A Christian minister must proclaim brotherhood as a personal commitment. But if his idealism is exploited by those he serves, the ax with which he strikes is dulled and he defeats the very purpose he proclaims. Is the ministry worth entering with such a handicap?

Members of congregations are primarily fair-minded and would not expect their minister to serve on an income level inferior to their own. In the light of the common assumptions of our dollar economy, it is not the congregation but the minister who seems the inconstant party in an agreement. Legally a minister's salary, fixed by the congregation, is part of a contract that binds both parties. The *Consumer's Price Index* (published by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics at Washington) may give us an idea of what happens to this contract.

Effects of Inflation

Let us say that in 1940 a minister made a salary agreement with a congregation which gave him his living expenses plus a modest 10 per cent for savings. By December 1941 the index was 110.5, showing that a rise in prices had wiped out the margin for savings. The minister is no longer satisfied, and the congregation increases his salary. By the end of 1945 the index is 129.9, by the end of the following year 153.3. In 1947 it is 167.0, and by the end of 1950 it reaches 178.4. The minister of course cannot be satisfied to accept a lower economic status, and therefore again and again has to come to his congregation with the complaint that their part of the contract is not satisfactory to him. Members of the congregation, on the other hand, have a tendency to feel about the minister as Jacob felt about Laban: "He has changed my wages ten times." Moreover they have to guard themselves against a reverse trend in money value. This makes them hesitant. The minister, not wanting to seem mercenary, desists from pushing the issue.

As time goes on the congregation become accustomed to seeing their pastor in a lower economic status. Their original concern becomes dulled and they accept his financial condition as proper. Thus rising prices that have been favorable to the congregation have brought the minister to a place where his testimony of brotherhood in Christ is weakened because he is no longer admitted into the brotherhood of sharing.

We ministers have been trying to remedy this situation by appealing to the conscience of Christian congregations to re-examine constantly their financial relation to their minister and by seeking

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Cost-of-Living salaries for all ministers would eliminate the tensions which arise from the unfair burdens economic changes cause

SALARIES FOR MINISTERS

to establish minimum salaries. The first of these remedies fails because it is not the way Christians permanently settle their problems. The second fails because it partakes of the same weakness that brought about the economic distress.

I don't know where my instructor, Arthur Raper, got the phrase, "Ritual the Conserver." It remains his contribution to my thinking. Ritual is an integral part of the worship service. But it is more than that. Semantically the word designates an ordered course of action regularly followed, through which basic attitudes necessary for social survival are fostered. There is always first the conscientious examination of the church's position in relation to any question. When a satisfactory position has been found, it is ritualized and thus transmitted to coming generations. The church's creeds are ritual involving faith, its organization is ritual involving practice. By not being allowed to remain a matter for constant re-evaluation but being made a part of the ritual, these institutions have survived for millenniums. Do we not, then, err psychologically when we leave the matter of ministerial support open for constant review?

Ritual of Giving

Church members have tried to solve this question of ministerial support—and indeed many of the church's economic problems—by means of a ritual of giving. The impelling drive behind the giving is the individual's acceptance of a shared responsibility that is continuous and therefore repetitive. But this ritual of giving is attached to unstable values. It is constantly frustrated by an inconstant economic system.

Some time ago a member of my church decided to resume his church relationships, which he had broken off a dozen years before. The first thing he did was to give the church an amount of money equal to twelve times his annual contribution at the time of his alienation. There you have the ritual of giving at work. First there is a common acceptance and distribution of the burden. After that the individual conscience applies itself, not to re-evaluation, but to measuring up to the accepted responsibility. This attitude is normal and is characteristic in all phases of church life.

Discerning churchmanship would attach the ritual of giving to constant values. A study of the origin of church giving in the Old Testament reveals that that is exactly what was done. The increase of the seed was tithed (Deut. 14:22). Thus economic fluctuations due to productivity were neutralized, and when the offering of grain was turned into money (14:25), the money values reflected the change in the cost of living. The adjusted giving was applied to church administration and charity and the conscience was tied to the human factors involved (14:29). Thus the conscience was bound to practices that became part of the ritual of living and that, as generations came and went, retained their validity because they were not subjected to the vagaries of an unstable economic system.

The consideration applied in Deuteronomy for the support of the Levite—"because he has no portion or inheritance with thee" (14:29)—remains substantially true with regard to the Christian minister. He cannot well engage in productive employment and at the same time fulfill his ministry. Thus accumulation of the profits of personal enterprise is denied him. Since he cannot reach for help into the profit system, he needs cost-of-living support. This support will be forthcoming only when church members, after realizing their responsibility, are permitted to perpetuate it in habits of giving which are not subjected to constant confusion by changing economic values.

Cost-of-Living Salaries

Salaries for ministers in terms of cost of living are the answer to the problem. This solution attacks the problem from the position of church expenditures, whereas churchmanship has often been satisfied to attack it from the position of church income. This is done when attention is limited to *methods* of giving, such as tithing. Certainly it is essential that there be methods of giving. But these must be tied to ultimate responsibility. When the church—as it does today—buys its minister on the cheap labor market, to which he has been consigned because of his convictions, it abrogates the responsibility of ministerial support and makes of the minister a buffer whose family has to absorb the shock that should be absorbed by all the families of the congregation together. Old Testament giving proceeds from the responsibility of supporting the Levite and the distressed, and upon this responsibility establishes a method of giving which is incorporated into the order or ritual of everyday living. The

responsibility is primary; the method receives its validity and impetus from recognition of the responsibility.

If the Christian church does not want to see her proclamation of brotherhood in Christ neutralized through denial by practice in her own household, then let her apply herself directly to the problem of ministerial support. Let her dispel from the minds of her members the thought that monetary values are constant. Let her assume responsibility to her ministers in terms of constant economic values. Let salary contracts be drawn up in terms of cost of living, and let members know that this contract has been commonly assumed. Let the church organize her members so they assume their share of this responsibility and incorporate it into their ritual of giving.

Others Have Led the Way

To the cry that ministers ought not to have a preferred position in time of distress, I would answer that there are two possibilities. Either let the minister share fully in times of economic plenty, so that he can lay by for times of scarcity, or give him his cost-of-living support in both times of plenty and times of scarcity; but cease destroying the minister by keeping him from sharing in the benefits of either plan.

When the church decides to give her ministers cost-of-living support, she will find that she is not a pioneer in the field. A well defined pathway has been blazed through the wilderness. The equating instrument that may be applied to salaries to measure their purchasing power is the *Consumer's Price Index*. This service by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, based upon study of our large cities, supplies a monthly index to the purchasing power of our monetary units. This index is the basis on which so-called "escalator clauses" in wage contracts are drawn up, whereby provision is made to adjust wages to the cost of living. As is well known, escalator clauses are becoming more and more the normal thing.

To pay ministers cost-of-living salaries is the best solution to our problem because it eliminates the tensions that inevitably arise when unfair burdens are cast on either party to the contract by changing economic values. It is fair and equitable because it increases the salary when the national income increases the income of church members, and decreases the salary when the members' income decreases. It is realistic because it permits salary adjustments on the basis of real values which remain fixed despite economic fluctuations. It is progressive churchmanship because it offers abiding goals about which giving may be continuously organized.

Why is it necessary once or twice in every generation to repeat the same arguments to persuade congregations that they should support their pastors adequately? Why should the church, which has been so adept at phrasing its theological truth into formulas that could withstand the millenniums, be confounded by this problem? The way toward a solution is to face the problem not in static but in dynamic terms.

Subversive Inactivity

By Frank B. Fagerburg

He that is not with me is against me. Matthew 12:30.

SUPPOSE that on last election day an officer had visited the home of an American citizen and said: "You did not vote today. You are summoned to court to defend yourself against the charge of contributing to the destruction of democracy." Or suppose someone should go on Sunday morning to an American father who, comfortable in bathrobe and bedroom slippers, is reading the newspaper and say to him, "Why have you chosen to help destroy religion and the church?" Suppose, again, that we should go to someone perfectly able to make a gift to the community chest, who instead joins the majority of citizens and does nothing about it, or to someone who is perfectly able to act as a solicitor of such gifts and does not, and say, "What do you have against the little children who are helped by clinics and hospitals?" or "Why are you aiding the cause of juvenile delinquency?" Every such imaginary individual would be amazed, forgetting for a moment that he should be greatly angered. Yet in each case the charge is a just one. We have talked a great deal about subversive activity. What about subversive inactivity?

Surely this is what Jesus meant when he said, "He that is not with me is against me." Was he not in other words saying, "In the business of faith and righteousness there is no such thing as neutrality. You are either for or against, and hesitation between the two means that you are against"?

I should like to apply this principle of Jesus' in two realms—democracy and the Christian cause.

Subversive Activity

All over America people have been alerted to the dangers of subversive activity. However much the newspaper stories may be exaggerated or timed for the pushing through of big military and naval appropriations, we can be certain that other countries are doing in America just what we are doing among them: infiltrating our nation with

spies. More than that, Russia with her aim to win the world, and American Communists in their loyalty to the Soviet, are making every possible effort to push their cause in our nation. Communism is inherently a missionary movement; its passion is to convert the whole world. Teachers are placed in key positions; industry is slowed down; strikes are encouraged; every unfortunate condition in our country is used as propaganda against us. Subversive activity is going on about us all the time, and we would be foolish not to keep aware of it and to oppose it in every way.

Real as all this is, however, it does not disturb me as much as something else—subversive *in*activity. These enemies of our country with all their tireless work are not as damaging as millions of citizens who think of themselves as loyal but who are simply indifferent. They are not against democracy and the American way of life; they are simply too busy making money or having a good time to be bothered. H. G. Wells focalized this problem in the petulant protest of the croquet player in one of his novels: "I don't care. The world may be going to pieces. The Stone Age may be returning. This may, as you say, be the sunset of civilization. I'm sorry, but I can't help it this morning. I have other engagements. All the same —laws of the Medes and Persions—I am going to play croquet with my aunt at half past twelve today."

When Communism Is No Threat

Communism is like the cold or tuberculosis germ which succeeds in one's system when vitality is low. The only kind of democracy that can withstand the attractive lures of communism is a strong democracy, a real democracy. When democracy is proved able to do for man the important things he most needs, no other way can have a chance with him. No matter how energetically we fight the subversive worker, he will ultimately succeed if the democratic body on which he works is not kept healthy. Our greatest need is to make democracy really work.

We have already alluded to the individual who does not use his right of franchise. It scarcely seems possible that what our forefathers died for, millions of American citizens will not take the trouble to exercise. Business, the movies, television and a hundred other good or bad concerns keep them too busy to spend an hour or two in becoming intelligent to vote. Does anyone doubt that democracy can fail utterly at this very point?

Then there are the sore points at which our much vaunted democracy fails to work, concerning which many people are prejudiced, utterly indifferent or simply bored. Did the little Negro boy have a point who, in his pledge of allegiance to the flag, said under his breath, "With liberty and justice for all—*accept me*"? The tragic incident a few weeks ago in a Midwest community in which a Negro family were terrorized by a mob and their home wrecked, the recent refusal by an American cemetery to bury an American Indian soldier killed in Korea—these cases and many more like them serve the cause of Russia and Communism more than a host of subversive workers. Whether we like it or not, there is truth in someone's statement, "Russia is being judged by the fine things she says; America is being judged by the bad things she does." Cleaning up one's own backyard, really practising American democracy at grass roots is above all else needed in our fine crusade for freedom.

I know that we are tired of hearing about the race problem. We would rather play golf or go to the ball game. But intelligently and honestly facing this problem, with others like it, will do more good for our democratic cause than anything we might do to fight subversive workers. If we ever lose the good that we have in America, the millions of indifferent people who refuse to think and to vote will be more responsible than the minority of undercover traitors.

Why Is Christianity Not Stronger?

Now let us direct our attention to the Christian cause, which is really the foundation of democracy. Why is it not stronger than it is? What can be done to make it what it ought to be?

Here we could point to some illustrations of subversive activity. The Communist figures at this point, for the basic philosophy of communism is antireligious. There are atheists, of course, and sometimes Christian people become very much concerned about them. We might name too every agent and agency of indulgence and sin that would demolish what we are trying to build. Indeed, there are some forces set to weaken and destroy the church, in the sense that if they succeed we must fail.

Here again, however, I am more concerned about subversive *in*activity. The force that is doing us most harm is represented by the vast army of the indifferent on the inside rather than by the clever foes on the outside.

Kindly Disposed Persons

There are, first, the great group of kindly disposed men and women who are for religion and the church in the sense that they think it is a good thing and prefer not to live in a churchless community, but who in no way whatever do a thing to make the church strong. They do not attend, except occasionally at Easter and Christmas. They have no part in the financial burden of a local church enterprise. Recently it was my duty and privilege to visit a large number of the "first" citizens of our community. In each instance, while it was not my main purpose for visiting, I asked specifically about the individual's religious connections. Almost without exception they had left the church.

Each such person is a center of influence. Together they set the tone of a community, and by

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their attitude and action make the pattern of human conduct. Many of them are attractive, good-natured pagans. What they do comes to be considered the smart thing to do. Their example says, "It is smart to ignore religion, to stay away from the church." Yes, and many of them, with a leftover of godly influence from pious parents or grandparents, live a pretty decent life and so help to bolster the feeling of those who say, "Who needs the church anyhow?"

These people would feel bad to be told that their indifference has any subversive effect, but this is nonetheless the impact which they make.

Nominal Members

Then there are the large number of people who belong to the church but are only nominal members. They are seldom in the pews. They cannot be counted on to make successful any of the church's forward-looking efforts. If they contribute money, it is in small ways which do not make any real drain upon their resources.

Samuel Butler often sneered at the Christian religion. He once wrote this in his notebook: "There will be no comfortable and safe development of our social arrangements—I mean we shall not get infanticide and the permission to suicide, nor cheap and easy divorce—till Jesus Christ's ghost has been laid." He added sarcastically, "And the best way to lay it is to be a moderate churchman."

Certainly a "moderate churchman" is not consciously against the church. He is for it in every way that will not inconvenience him or cost too much. Such people give the church the semblance of bigness and strength which is really not there when it comes to a test. They raise hopes in the hearts of religious leaders that something effective might be done, but when the trial is made their inertia only adds to discouragement. For their children their example sets the pattern of what ought to be expected. Counted *in*, but to all intents and purposes really *out*, they define churchmanship for others in a way that will always keep the church impotent.

Germs of Doubt

Need anything be said about the margin of the church represented by those who by their Christian association hold up fine ideals but by their business practices and social conduct make of the church a laughing stock? They supply the fuel for the common and all too well founded criticism, "There are too many hypocrites in the church!" Subversive agents they are, not by willful design but by failing to practice their professed faith. They give the preacher a friendly handclasp and go out to negate what he says and tries to do.

Last, we must see that, failing to act upon his highest insights, a man opens his own heart to the germs of doubt and despair. Inactivity is subversive to his own faith. Not only do his community and his church suffer by his indifference; his own soul suffers. Religion that is not daily belted into life is religion that is growing daily more feeble and unreal. Inactivity is subversive of faith and religious experience that can grip, guide and empower.

Who has not sometimes had the experience of awaking on Sunday morning feeling as if he had no more religion than a post? Indeed every normal person has such moods. If in such a moment a person took honest inventory of his soul, he would probably discover that it is subversive inactivity that has flattened his spirit. He has kept too busy to orient his soul each day to God in prayer. His Bible has become dusty with disuse. He has stopped weekly fellowship with Christian friends. He has not looked around each day for a place to put his fine intentions to work. Some years ago a Yale professor lost his religious faith, and here is his honest explanation of what had happened: "I never consciously gave up a religious belief. It was as if I had put my beliefs into a drawer, and when I opened it there was nothing there at all." See what subversive inactivity had done to this man.

Faith Fed by Practice

We know right well that Christian practice results from Christian belief. But there is a reciprocal action at work—Christian faith is fed and kept really Christian by practice. When the fires of faith and religious experience have burned low, I am needing most of all not some intellectual "shot in the arm," not some clever arguments about God's existence and Christ's divinity; what I need is activity—getting busy with prayer or devotions or a job that helps to build decency and faith in someone else. This is a wise word from Edward Shillito: "Faith begins as an experiment and ends as an experience." It is reminiscent of Grenfell's testimony after a life of practical Christian service in Labrador which inspired so many: "Faith is something to use. I have always wanted to use faith. And the more I used it, the more I got."

Where did so many Protestant people get the idea that we can take up public worship or lay it down as we choose? The writer of the letter to the Hebrews knew what he was talking about when he wrote, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." Being in our places at church is a part of the spiritual routine that keeps religious experience alive. Where did we get the idea that we can give a pittance when Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"? That is which we invest our dear possessions has a way of getting into our souls.

"He that is not with me is against me." There is no neutrality in the cause of decency and righteousness. It is true of democracy. It is true of our Christian cause. It is true of our individual faith and experience.

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By J. Wallace Hamilton

Slipping Feet

As for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped. Psalm 73.

WE'RE starting off this morning with the most enervating emotion—doubt, spiritual depression. The Psalms are full of doubt, of pessimistic complaints against the Almighty: "How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget me?" "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" It's that Monday morning blue feeling, that down-in-the-dumps, what's-the-use-of-anything mood which moves in on our spirits like a fog.

Somebody said the difference between the Hebrew struggle with doubt and the modern struggle is that when modern people are plunged into emotional depression they develop a neurosis or go out and get drunk or write an article to a magazine, while the Jew always voiced his skepticism in a prayer and poured out his trouble before the Lord.

"As for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped." Here's a man going through what the early saints called "the dark night of the soul." Gloom had settled down upon his spirit like a terrible fog. His mind was tortured with dark thoughts and his soul bowed down in fearful apprehension. He couldn't think straight, couldn't pray, and God was nowhere around. He was like the Chinese immigrant who came to Canada and landed in Nova Scotia. "Lighthouse," he said, "no good for fog. Lighthouse he shine, whistle he blow, fog bell he ring; but fog, he come in just the same. No good!" And so it seemed there was nothing he could do to keep out the fog. It's not an unusual experience. No one, I suppose, is wholly free from it.

Sickness may bring it. Most of us have had experiences in which we learned that physical weakness, through injury, infection, continued emotional strain, can bring about a sinking feeling in the spirit. The body and soul are one piece and low moods are often the result of low vitality. We are convinced, with Georgia Harkness, that many of the Old Testament worthies were sick and didn't know it. What they saw in their illness was a punishment sent by the Lord. But the Lord had nothing to do with it; it was more likely their liver.

Then, temperament can do it. We're not all made alike. Some people are sanguine, by nature cheerful, optimistic, with a tendency to look on the bright side of things. Others seem to be born with a somber spirit, like Thomas the doubter, given more to low moods and dark, pessimistic thoughts. Furthermore, temperament in every one of us fluctuates like the weather, varies. There are not many places like St. Petersburg, where the sun shines every day. The Negro spiritual says, "Sometimes I'm up, sometimes I'm down, O yes, Lord." Everyone gets depressed at times. We should learn to accept that as we do the weather. In fact, the weather often causes the fluctuation.

Serious Problem

However, when we do come to grips with the psalmist's problem, we are up against something more serious than mere temperament or temporary illness. "My feet had well-nigh slipped, for I was envious of the arrogant. I saw the prosperity of the wicked. Surely I have cleansed my hands in vain." That was it. It was the problem of a hostile world, the preponderance, the arrogance of evil, the overwhelming, oppressive weight of the world's wickedness. It got him down. It's getting us down too.

Have you heard about the man who was so frightened and disgusted, he decided to get out of it? He climbed a bridge railing and was about to jump when a policeman shouted, "Hey, you can't do that!" The policeman got out on the railing with the man, trying to talk him out of it. Finally the man handed him the morning newspaper and showed him the headlines, and then they both jumped. This day-by-day bombardment of depressing facts, the steady pressure of fear, uncertainty, anxiety, the abortive attempts for peace, the steady drift toward chaos—no wonder our spirits are depressed, beaten down by the hammer blows of the world's enormous evil. One of our better columnists, commenting on the assassination of first Gandhi, then Bernadotte, said, "In this violent age it happens all too often that the men of peace and good will perish while the men of blood and violence, secure in their bodyguards, continue their evil work." That was exactly what got the psalmist down.

His problem was aggravated by a warped phil-

For 22 years J. WALLACE HAMILTON has served the Pasadena Community Church, St. Petersburg, Fla. This church is often described as "the most amazing church in America." For seven months of the year it has a congregation of from five to eight thousand, most of whose attendants sit in their automobiles and participate in the service by means of an amplifying system. It is America's pioneer "drive-in" church.

osophy and twisted thinking. He was brought up on the idea that God was partial to the righteous. It was the prevailing belief among pious Jews that prosperity was the mark of God's approval and adversity the evidence of his wrath; that if you were the kind of person you ought to be, said your prayers, paid your tithe, you had a right to expect God to give you a good crop and protect you from adversity. See it in the first Psalm: "Blessed is the man who walks uprightly; whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Or in the 97th: "A thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee." It was God's business to look after his people.

Job's Dilemma

Remember how Job was puzzled when it didn't work out that way. He could not understand why calamity should fall on him, a righteous man. What did calamity mean if not that God was displeased? This is a fallacy that stubbornly persists in the Christian mind, in spite of Jesus and the cross and what he said about rain falling on the just and the unjust. The old-time Horatio Alger stories used to have a good boy and a bad boy. The bad boy got the stick and the good boy got the pie. The whole moral order neatly arranged for the prosperity and protection of the righteous.

Now, what shook the psalmist was that obviously something had gone wrong with the formula. His creed was shaken by the facts. His philosophy was violated by events. He saw the righteous suffer and, what was worse, the ungodly prospering. "Their eyes stand out with fatness. They set their tongue against the heavens and go insolently on in their evil; while I, poor innocent fool, go on praying and cleanse my hands in vain." He wrestled with the problem of how that could be in a God-ordered world, and the thought of it pushed at his tortured mind until it shoved him down into a deep blue funk. "What's the use of it? What's the good of being good?"

Footing and Faith

Nothing is so weakening as the fear that one is fighting a losing battle against the facts, the established order of the universe. As long as a man can believe, he can stand almost anything; but to feel that nothing makes sense, that the universe is without moral meaning, arrayed against his struggle to be good—that is unbearable, that will take the heart out of anyone. In one of Somerset Maugham's novels, a character throws up his hands: "I'm not prepared to be made a fool of. If life means that, that virtue is trampled, honesty mocked, beauty fouled, then I say, 'To hell with life.' " So the psalmist came to a near-collapse of faith. "My feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipped."

What to do about that! How can we keep our footing and our faith? That question is immensely important now, for a depressed person in these times is a public liability. Too many people and too little faith can demoralize society. Well, the 73rd Psalm is in the Book because the man who wrote it came out of his emotional slump and quite frankly tells us how he did it. He said he went to church. That's the first thing. "I went into the sanctuary of God." It's the best first-aid therapy I know, just to be reminded that God is. Above the fog and darkness, God. To turn your thought from yourself to him, like Peter when he felt his feet slipping in the sea. Many a person, like Tolstoy, has been lifted out of the depth of a depressing mood just by the thought of God. Our psalmist kept saying over and over to himself, "The eternal God is my refuge," until there was an uprush of hope in him and his heart grew quiet and composed.

You have read about that troubled night when Lincoln was shot. When the news reached New York, an excited crowd milled around the hotel where Garfield was stopping. As the excitement increased, Garfield walked out on a balcony and quoted the 97th Psalm: "Clouds and darkness are around about us, but righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne. God reigns, and the government at Washington still lives." Quietly the crowd dispersed with the hush of God upon them, and the streets were stilled again. "I went into the sanctuary of God."

The First Step

It's no good keeping your mind pounding on the problem or looking for solution in the newspaper. You get nothing out of that but more darkness. There's no use praying either, if your mind is forever centered on your slipping feet. You know, the more you keep your mind on your weakness, the weaker you become. You've got to lift your mind to where strength is, fix your thought on Him. A wise person has said: "When we look within us we see our weakness and get discouraged. When we look around us we see the confusion and get distracted. When we look above us we see Him and get empowered." Just to be reminded that God is—that's first.

Then too, the psalmist got his thinking straightened out. That's important. Our friend Tom Dreier said: "When a machine creaks, shudders, shakes, fails to perform efficiently, it is a victim of either bad design or bad management. But when a man is gloomy, grouchy, bad-tempered and depressed, he is most likely a victim of his own bad thinking." It was so with the psalmist. Looking back on his low mood, he said, "So foolish was I, and ignorant." It's just not true that God neatly parcels out his providence in favor of the righteous, carefully seeing to it that the good man gets a little more rain for his corn while the lightning makes a detour round his barn. It just isn't true.

We may wish sometimes that God would make a wider difference between the sinner and the saint so that we could say, "See there, it pays to be righteous." But you've got to ask yourself what the world would be like if he did. If good people were protected from sickness and suffering, if the law of gravity should involve the sinner and exempt the saint, if God should reward faithfulness with material prosperity—what, then, would happen

to goodness? There would be no good, only good business. Anybody would be good for a meal ticket, and the saints would be coddled weaklings of the world. The purpose of religion is not to keep us happy and make us prosperous, to provide a charm of protection; it is to stretch our souls into greatness, make us the children of God. And some measure of adversity is inescapable to stretch the soul upon.

Neither Is God's Way

It's just not true that adversity is the mark of God's wrath and prosperity the evidence of his smile. The Jews tried their best to believe that for long ages, and their feet were always slipping at that point because, again and again, God seemed to let them down, didn't protect them or spare them from adversity. Once in a while some lonely prophet would come to the truth of it, like Habakkuk who, when the Chaldean hordes swept in on the little nation, climbed up into his watchtower to tell God frankly what he thought and, listening there in the silence, came down subdued, straightened out in his thinking about what providence was for. Listen to him vow that henceforth he will serve God, not for what is in it but no matter what comes out of it: "Though the fig tree may not blossom—though the olive crop has failed—though in stalls no cattle lie, yet will I trust in the Lord who helps us keep our footing in the heights."

Job came to it too, in spite of his well meaning friends, including Calvin Coolidge. As some of you may remember, Mr. Coolidge wrote an article for a magazine in which he used Job as the illustration of how to overcome an economic depression. For Mr. Coolidge, the point of the whole Job story was in the happy little ending. Here is what he said: "When Job's change of attitude became apparent, his friends came back to him. They furnished him capital to set himself up in business again and, purified by his reverses, he became twice as wealthy and prosperous as before. By keeping his faith, Job recovered from his depression." Twice as wealthy and prosperous as before. But that isn't *it* at all. What is *it* came out of Job's own mouth. In a sublime moment, when all things seemed against him, and even his wife said, "Curse God and die," Job lifted his boil-covered arm to heaven and cried, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." That's really the way to come out of a depression. Get your tangled thinking straightened out.

Getting Behind Appearances

Still another thing our psalmist learned in church that kept his feet from slipping. In that high moment of insight, he got behind appearances to the way things really are. He learned that his ethical instinct was more to be trusted than his emotional moods. What had shaken him, he thought, was the unsteadiness of the moral order, the success of the wicked, the helplessness of God. He came to see that the unsteadiness was mostly in himself, his own nearsightedness. "I went into the sanctuary of God, then saw I their end." So it wasn't as bad as he had thought. The rule of God was not as shaky as it seemed, and the prosperity of the unprincipled was not as solid as it appeared. The moral order was not slipping; he was.

It would steady our feet, too, to remember that. Appearances are often deceptive. Even the facts will fool you. Huxley said, "You've got to see beyond the facts in order to see the facts." This desk appears solid, but the fact is that it isn't. It's a mass of whirling electrons. The earth appears flat, and it isn't. It seems to be stationary, and it isn't. The sun appears to rise, and it doesn't. It sets out there in the west every night—Haven't we seen it with our own eyes?—and that isn't the fact at all. Even the physical nature of the universe deceives our faulty senses, and science will tell you that it takes a good deal of insight to get back of appearances to the way things really are.

Up in the ethical realm, it is always the appearances that get you off. Sin seems so alluring, the sparkle of wine in a glass.Force seems so effective to crush down your enemy by superior power. Self-assertion seems so solid. These hardheaded, practical ways of getting what you want make goodness and meekness and the gentler ways of God seem so weak and helpless. But it's all illusion. They're not so powerfully successful when you get off a little way and look back. "I saw their end," this ancient Jew says. "I saw where they come out."

'The Compass Is Always Right'

Of all the generations in history, we should know what that means. We've seen the end of so many things, where sinners come out—big ones and little ones— when they run up against the elusive something we call the "Will of God." No generation has witnessed more powerful demonstrations of the futility of force and the dreary end of the wicked. Mussolini hanging by his heels; Hitler, who seemed so strong, burned to a crisp in the hot fires of the world's revulsion. "Napoleon tried his best," Emerson said, "to beat the moral order, but the Almighty was bored with him and said, Out." In Ibsen's play, the Emperor Julian is shown doing his diabolical best to dethrone the Galilean and bring back the gods of Caesar. "But at every step," the author said, "he was confronted with the baffling power of Jesus." The baffling power of Jesus! Something there is, for all it's apparent indifference, that won't let evil come out of right nor bad seeds come up to good harvest. The world is not haywire; we are. The psalmist discovered that. "Fret not thyself because of evildoers." Don't get too upset about the prosperity of wicked men. It's mostly illusion. They're soon cut off. They destroy themselves. Their heart is pierced by their own sword. Trust your instinct; that is right.

Go back and read again that delightful book *We Took to the Woods*, written by a woman who, with her husband, had been living for several years in a lonely spot in the Maine woods. One day, the author says, she went over the mountain

range to B Pond, and on the way back got lost. It wasn't far, and ordinarily a well marked, easy hike. But the Maine hurricane had blown down, twisted and piled up the great trees so that in many spots the trail was almost completely obliterated. The ranger at B Pond asked her if she had a compass. "Remember," he said, as she started back, "if you have to use it, the compass is right. The compass is always right." She smiled. She knew every inch of the way; she couldn't get lost.

But she did—suddenly found herself in a swamp where nothing was familiar, had no idea where she was, whether east or west of the trail. It was a terrifying feeling. When she looked at the compass she was completely shocked. It was so obviously wrong. She wanted to go left, but the compass said right. And then she remembered the ranger's warning—trust your compass, the compass is always right. So, in spite of her contrary judgment, she went along with the compass. But always that something in her feelings kept pulling her the other way. The compass just couldn't be right; she knew it; something in her told her so. "To go against that inner feeling." she says, "to follow the compass, was mental torture." Then at long last she heard the river. It wasn't where it should have been but it was exactly where the compass said it would be.

Often you have to fight your feelings to keep on God's trail. You can't trust your moods. You'd better disregard them. Your ethical insight is a better guide, your faith that God is, that the world is his, however appearances and moods seem against it. A feeling of defeat doesn't mean that God has forsaken you, nor do slipping feet mean that the ground has given way. God's earth is solid. Put your feet down on it! Believe your beliefs! Trust your compass! It will get you to the trail, and he will help you keep your footing in the heights.

HELPING GOD ANSWER PRAYERS

A Sermon for Children by Melvin J. Joachim

LITTLE JACKIE always ended his prayers with, "Bless Daddy and bless Mommie." One Monday night, when he came to the end of his prayers, he started to say, "God bless . . ." and he stopped. His mother said, "Go on, son." The little fellow continued, "God bless Daddy . . ." and he stopped again and hesitated for a moment. His mother urged him to finish his prayers: "I am very tired tonight, Jackie. Please finish your prayers and go to sleep."

Jackie said nothing. His brow was wrinkled and there was a shining question mark in each of his blue eyes. But his mother was impatient. She had had a very hard day. There was the family washing in the morning and the ironing in the afternoon. The doobell and the telephone made many extra steps, and Jackie had been unusually restless—running in and out of the house with his little friends, asking dozens of questions of the "why?" and "what?" variety. So you see, there was good cause for his mother's impatience. She was about worn out and there were still the dishes to be done, the rooms to be straightened up, and mending that had to be done, for little boys have a way of wearing out clothes very fast. "Come, come, son, no more daydreaming and no more questions. Say the rest of your prayers for I must get at the dishes."

The boy looked up into his mother's eyes and with a child's seriousness said: "But, Mommie, I've been thinking about what my Sunday school teacher said yesterday. She said we must help God answer our prayers; that he blessed people through the kind deeds we do. Every time you wanted me to do something today, I said no and ran out to play. I didn't bring in the morning paper when you asked me to. I left my toys scattered all over the front room, and you had to pick them up. When you called me to dinner, I waited until you came after me. I told you I brushed my teeth this morning, but I didn't. When the dog ran away, I wouldn't go after him; Daddy had to get him. How can I ask God to bless you and Daddy tonight?"

Mother smiled a forgiving smile. The prayers were at last finished. She kissed him and tucked him in bed.

The next day, Jackie was up the minute he heard things stirring in his mother's room. When his father came to breakfast, he found the morning paper by his plate. Jackie had already brought it in. During the day, he ran errands for his mother and always came promptly when she called. Before he got ready for bed he put each toy away.

That night he said his prayers and ended with, "God bless Mommie and Daddy again tomorrow as *we* blessed them today."

The Ability To Carry On

Animals seem to have the ability to carry on under difficulty in a larger measure than humans. They face all weather and all seasons without whimpering. They lick their wounds for a few days and keep on. A Negro farmer's dog had one of its legs cut off by a train. The stump healed without medical attention and the dog went back to chasing rabbits on three legs. Then he got in the way of the train again and lost another leg. Again, without medical attention, the stump healed, and according to the owner the dog now attempts to chase rabbits on two legs.—*Renwick C. Kennedy.*

Manna—What Is It?

By Thomas Taylor Faichney

IN his novel *Aylwin or The Renascence of Wonder,* Walter Theodore Watts-Dunton speaks of two impulses of the human mind. One is the impulse of Acceptance, taking for granted all the phenomena of the outer world. The other is that of Expectance, which confronts these same phenomena with wonder and inquiry.

To the impulse of acceptance life has become common and routine; to such an one "a primrose by the river's brim" is but a yellow primrose, and nothing more. For such there is no Thanksgiving; professing to be superior to all such things he reveals his utter lack of imagination. With no soul to lift up the eyes to heaven, he is not even true to the name man—*anthropos,* "the upward-looking one." His kinship is with the dust. Over him it might be already intoned, "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

In contrast, the impulse of expectance has been the inspiration to all that is great and good in science and invention, in philosophy and religion. It was the spirit of wonder—*Thaumazein*—which sent the Greek on the philosophic quest for goodness, beauty and truth. In that same expectance a shepherd who had tended his flock for forty years turned aside one day, and in a common bush which burned with fire Moses beheld the Divine Glory. In wondering amaze he took his shoes from off his feet, and led a people to immortality.

The Pilgrim Fathers

It was the same sanctified imagination which led a handful of people on the inhospitable New England coast, in the year 1621, to proclaim their first Thanksgiving. The year before, seeking freedom to worship God, they had said farewell to the land of their birth, had endured the terrors of the deep, had withstood the rigors of the winter which had killed off half their number. Then summer came. They grew the corn, harvested the small crop, and gave thanks to God.

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That same God-given impulse led the children of Israel, on seeing the bounty God had provided for them in the wilderness, to look on it and call it "manna," meaning "What is it?" so that every time they named it they would be moved to wonder and praise.

Our Materialistic Age

The tragedy of our materialistic age is that, because of the rapid advance of science and invention, we think we have an explanation for everything; because we have a name for everything, we assume that we know everything. The psychoanalyst is even prepared to tell us that there are chemical and psychological laws which determine that which Solomon said was beyond his ken—the way of a man with a maid! There is no place left now for wonder. We are too sophisticated to hear the song of the angels. I sometimes wonder if much of our so-called atheism is just the result of our limited knowledge and lack of imagination.

In our desire to have the scientific mind, we have lost the wonder and inquiry of the scientist. Listen to Kepler, the pioneer in astronomy, as he sweeps the heavens with his telescope: "I am thinking the thought of God after him." Or hear Newton in the light of his epochal discovery of the law of gravitation: "I am but a child who has found a pebble on the shore of an infinite sea." In *Aurora Leigh* Elizabeth Barrett Browning echoes that same wonder:

> No lily-muffled hum of a summer-bee,
> But finds some coupling with the spinning stars;
> No pebble at your foot, but proves a sphere;
> No chaffinch, but implies the cherubim;
> . . . Earth's crammed with heaven,
> And every common bush afire with God;
> But only he who sees, takes off his shoes . . .

'He Took Bread'

With sanctified imagination our Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread and gave thanks. Let us take bread. What is it—manna? Bread—the common food of man, the fruit of man's labor on God's gifts of seed, soil, sun and rain. Bread—that for which man plows, sows, reaps, grinds and bakes. Bread—the distribution of which requires merchants, elevators, trains, trainmen, ships and seamen, to buy which we mine coal, iron and oil. Bread is not only the symbol of the labor of man; it is that labor crystallized.

For that same food primitive man sought the fertile valley of the Nile, the shores of the Mediterranean, the more rigorous climate of the Atlantic coast. It sent man adventuring over the Atlantic; it brought him pioneering to the prairies of North America with their extremes of optimism and despair, of heat and of cold. Bread—for which man has worked and prayed and fought. Can we wonder that when our Lord took bread, "he gave thanks"!

Let this Thanksgiving be a time when we open the windows of our soul, when we look out and see earth crammed with heaven and every common bush afire with God, and, seeing, bow in worship and adoration.

> When all thy mercies, O my God,
> My rising soul surveys,
> Transported with the view, I'm lost
> In wonder, love and praise.

Is Your Creed Too Small?

By Howard C. Hageman

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. I Timothy 3:16.

THIS is a rather interesting verse from a number of points of view. New Testament scholars tell us, for example, that it is extremely likely that St. Paul is here quoting from a hymn already known and sung by the Christian congregations of that early day. If that be true, then these few lines could easily be the oldest Christian hymn which has been preserved for us. Perhaps you can catch something of its rhythm as it has been recaptured even in the English translation. God was manifest in the flesh . . . justified in the Spirit . . . seen of angels . . . preached unto the Gentiles . . . believed on in the world . . . received up into glory.

But interesting as that piece of information may be, it is not the striking thing about these lines. They challenged my attention at once by the way in which they begin—without controversy, beyond all possible doubt. There is one thing, says St. Paul, about the Christian gospel, one thing about the Christian faith, which is really beyond all controversy, which really cannot be disputed or denied. Whatever you may choose to believe or not believe, whatever you may accept or refuse to accept, this one fact about the Christian faith stands beyond all doubt. No matter who or what you are, there is this one thing which you must accept.

Well, now, what do you suppose that could be? To judge from the way in which we pick to pieces every single aspect of the Christian faith, is there anything about it that is without controversy, that is beyond all doubt? We used to have a saying that there was nothing certain in this world except death and taxes. And recent events have rather tended to confirm the certainty of each of them! But here apparently is something that is just as certain, something about which, like death and taxes, you can be absolutely sure, something that no one can question, something that no one can doubt.

A Great Faith

And without controversy, *great* is the mystery of godliness. You can be absolutely certain of this: the Christian faith is a great faith; the Christian creed is a great creed. You may not like it; you may want no part of it; you may turn your back on it and refuse to have anything at all to do with it. But one thing you cannot do. You cannot deny its greatness, the breadth of its reach, the depth of its insight, the height of its vision. Whatever you may think of the Christian faith or of the Christian religion, this much is certain. It is not a petty, small-minded, hole-in-the-corner affair, but a gigantic creed, enormous in its assertions and staggering in its implications. Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness.

But I wonder whether St. Paul would have said that, whether he would have thought that the Christian faith was really great beyond all controversy, if he could have known us. If he might come and walk and talk here in our midst, see the Christian faith as you and I hold it and practice it, know what you and I make of it in our own experience, would he still think its greatness was without controversy? If St. Paul could sit down in your kitchen or on your bench in the factory and talk with you for a quarter of an hour or so about the Christian faith, do you suppose he would still be willing to write as he did? Or put it this

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way: do you think that anyone acquainted with us and our religion would be compelled to say, "Well, though I cannot accept it, still I must confess honestly that yours is a great faith and a great religion"? Has anyone ever said that to you?

Well, what they do say to us, what they do think about us is, I fear, quite the reverse. If there is anything that is without controversy to the average pagan in the street, it is that the Christian religion is a small-time mediocrity concerned with all kinds of trivial and irrelevant things. What is the impression that the church and the gospel leave on the average American? They think of them as an old maids' tea party, huffing and puffing over a lot of petty vices and picayune issues, expending enormous amounts of valuable energy on matters which, like the flowers that bloom in the spring, have nothing to do with the case. George MacLeod, the leader of the Iona Community in Scotland, has somewhere written of the boy who comes back from military service with great passionnate questions about the future of the world and his place in it. But when he goes back to his church, he finds it so taken up with trivialities and so preoccupied with little things that do not matter, that he turns away from it in cynicism and disgust.

Christianity's Contribution Questioned

And can you deny that that is exactly what has happened? Can you deny that this indictment is being made against the Christian faith? It is too small. It fusses around with Sunday school picnics and strawberry socials. It deals in pious generalities and dull platitudes. But in face of the great issues of life and death which confront our world, it has nothing to say. The Communists have something to say. The C.I.O. has something to say. The N.A.M. has something to say. But the church merely talks on and on about irrelevant side issues. That's the impression, and it goes far wider and it runs far deeper than you would like to believe. The very thing which St. Paul saw beyond all disputing, the greatness of the Christian faith, is something which today would be openly questioned and even denied in many a quarter.

And I am not surprised. Indeed, I would say that the impression is probably justified. For the fact is that the creed of most of us is small, incredibly small. We no longer believe in a great God who in his mighty power holds the issues of life and death, who marches across human history in iron shoes, destroying kingdoms and empires, overturning and overruling, until his will be done. Instead we have set up in his place a little god, a polite little old man, who doesn't seem to care what we do, who makes sporadic and ineffectual attempts to control us, but otherwise is pretty sentimental about his rebellious human family. We no longer believe in a great Christ who fought the power of evil right up to the cross, who burst the bonds of death to rise in mighty power, who formed a new humanity, who rules over a kingdom that shall have no end. No, he has gone, and in his place we have a nice Jesus, cut down to our size, a tragic and almost effeminate martyr who said some lovely things and died tragically for having said them. And we no longer believe in a great church, founded on a rock, given the power to bind and to loose, able to withstand the very gates of hell, moving confidently toward its final victory through fire and storm and shock. Who wants that? We have a much more human church, as comfortable as an old shoe. We go to it when we wish; we stay home when we wish. What difference? Isn't it our church to do with as we please?

But look for a moment, if you will, at this little hymn of St. Paul's in which he seeks to set forth the greatness of the Christian faith. It is, of course, Jesus Christ of whom he is speaking—Jesus Christ in whom the real wonder, the real greatness, the real glory of it all take visible form and blaze in beauty before our eyes. Watch and see with what great strokes he paints in the full perspective of his picture.

God Manifest

Manifest in the flesh . . . justified in the Spirit. Ah, there is the depth of it, reaching right down to the inmost core of human living. Where does God show himself? Where do we find him? In interstellar space? On a hillside at sunset time? In the dim religious light of some great cathedral? No, manifest in the flesh; in actual life, real life, with its sin and its struggle, its pain and its sorrow, its guilt and its shame, its dirt and its death. In the place where you stand, my friend, and where I stand, there is Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, to join the battle with us, to face our problems, share our pain, die our death. But even while he comes in the flesh, in the inner heart, in the spirit where the poison works, where motives are warped, wills are weakened, hearts are hardened —right there the poison does not touch him. Justified in the Spirit, pure in heart, sincere in life, unfailing in obedience—that's the depth. Coming down to life, your life and mine as they are, sharing their full burden, yet still triumphing over all their temptations. Manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit.

And the breadth of it, the full extent of it—preached unto the Gentiles . . . believed on in the world. This God who comes into human life to touch and transform it is not limited. He does not select any special group or any particular class for his grace and favor. He does not limit his goodness to the saintly or the pious. He does not reserve his love for the Americans or the British. God so loved the world . . . And that means that his love and power are working right now in all the world. Even where it seems that he has been turned out, even where it appears that he has been driven underground, even where lust and force and cruelty have taken command and hold sway—even there the power of God in Christ is making its influence felt. You cannot take any aspect of human life, any nation, any system, any section, cut it off and say, "There God can do nothing." Every time he will break down your barriers and do his own good pleasure. Preached unto the Gen-

tiles . . . believed on in the world—that's the breadth of the Christian creed, holding a globe in its embrace.

But the height of it—seen of angels . . . received up into glory. Yes, they are poetic phrases, but don't let their imagery put you off. What they mean is this: not even time is any barrier to Jesus Christ. Just as all nations are his, so all ages are his as well. The future belongs to him, as well as the past. He won it on his cross. He holds it by his love. The future does not belong to Stalin or Molotov—no, nor to Harry Truman either. It does not belong to American democracy or to the common man. History is filled with stories of those who thought they had a corner on it, only to find it slipping through their fingers. Why worry about them? Why let them get you down? Why bite your nails and lie awake nights wondering what is going to happen? Nothing is going to happen that is not held in the firm control of those nail-pierced hands. For if the future is his, that means that your future is his, and the future of those that you love—yes, and the future of those that you have loved and lost awhile. This is the final greatness of the Christian faith. It is this that makes a man able to stand and gaze as far as he can see into the future and not be afraid. He knows that the future belongs to our God and to his Christ.

Now that's the Christian gospel, reaching down to the inmost center of human life, reaching out to the furthest boundaries of earth, reaching up to that far-off point where the sea of eternity laps against the shore of time. Reject it if you want to. Turn your back on it if you care to. That's your privilege. That's the freedom which God has given you. But in God's name, don't turn it into a cheap caricature, a petty parody, and pass that off as the Christian faith!

If life is too big for you in these days, if the world is too much for you, it can mean only one thing: Your creed is too small. And it is not the Christian creed. For the Christian creed is as deep as the heart of man, as broad as the universe, and as boundless as eternity itself. Great living demands a great creed. "And without controversy *great* is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

Titles and Texts

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

Robert C. Stanger, Bethany Evangelical and Reformed, Chicago, Ill. "The Need for Moral Authority." Judg. 21:25. *In those days there was no king in Israel: . . . and every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*

Robert Esbjornson, Gustavus Adophus College, St. Peter, Minn. "Evicting Our Souls' Undesirable Tenants" or "The Parable of the Apartment House." Luke 2:7—*There was no room for them in the inn.*

Herbert Booth Smith, Jr., First Presbyterian, San Anselmo, Calif. "The God of Positive Promise." II Cor. 1:20—*For how many soever be the promises of God, in him is the yea.*

Clinton C. Cox, Drexel Park Presbyterian, Chicago, Ill. "Cadet Cribbing and Basketball Scandal." II Tim. 2:5—*And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.*

John W. Mayer, Holy Trinity, Exeter, England. "Little Children, Bald Heads and She Bears." II Kings 2:23-24—*There came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said . . . Go up, thou bald head. And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them.*

Frank R. Snavely, Gainesboro Methodist, Gainesboro, Tenn. "Man Needs Christ." Heb. 4:16—*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

J. Francis F. Peak, First Baptist, Wildwood, N. J. "What Kind of Shoes Do You Wear?" Eph. 6:15—*Have your feet shod with the stability of the gospel of peace.*

The Minister's Morning Prayer of Recommittal

By Walter S. Davison

Professor of Practical Theology in Union Theological Seminary, New York, and Dean of Auburn Theological Seminary in Association with Union Seminary

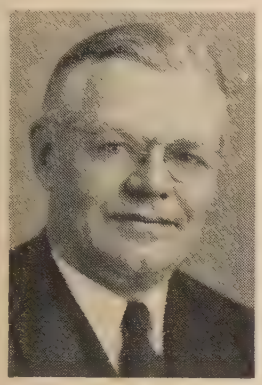
O GOD, thou art my God;
I belong to thee; I long for thee.
All my springs are in thee.
In thee is the meaning of my existence.
Toward thee is the deepest intention of my soul, the set direction of my life.
To thee I offer myself anew, and all my powers, and all the work of this day.
I put myself completely into thy hands to be used for thy purposes.
I would have no other desire than to accomplish thy will.
Grant me the help of thy Holy Spirit that I may live this day well as unto thee.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

WARREN GRAFTON, minister of the Country Club Christian Church in Kansas City, comes of a long line of preachers. His grandfather was a student and associate of Alexander Campbell. He was educated at Butler University and at Union Theological Seminary. His church contributes $53,000 a year to missions, which is all the biography any preacher needs.

Greatness and the Grass Roots

By Warren Grafton

THE glory of the Christian faith is its ability to produce greatness at the grass roots. Its starting point is the life of common man—your life, my life. Its finishing point is the creation of uncommon man—and that too can be true of your life and mine.



Nearly a century after the birth of Christ the author of John's Gospel, looking back in retrospect on what Christian faith had produced, made this comment: "As many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

John was writing history when he wrote those words. They do not represent idealism—what man ought to become. They represent fact—what man had become under the influence of the Christian gospel. Man had become in fact, as well as in ideal, the child of God.

Humanity at the Grass Roots

Nor was it kings and potentates, neither scholars nor seers who had become the children of God. It was humanity at the grass roots. It was a publican, fisherman, peasants, outcasts, a woman of the streets. In those days—the days of Jesus' ministry, the days that followed Pentecost—greatness sprang from the grass roots.

Paul called it to their attention in his letter to the Corinthians: "Behold your calling, brethren, that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called." You wouldn't have joined the First Christian Church in Antioch or the Second Christian Church in Corinth seeking better social connections. If you were getting up a guest list for your daughter's wedding, none of their names would have been included.

But they became the hinges, these early Christians, on which swung the doors into the new age. As at the dawn of creation God had taken common clay and breathed into it the breath of life and made it man, so at the dawn of the Christian era God took the clay of common humanity and touched it with greatness. Greatness at the grass roots!

Some of you are worried today about the course that humanity is taking. You are worried about communism as a world revolution among the masses. You are worried about the trends toward socialism here in America. You are worried about the rise of statism here and abroad, and the increasing trend toward a governmental paternalism that carries man on a sofa pillow from the cradle to the grave. And you are worried over the rising cost of it all and the threat it carries of national bankruptcy. Your worries are well founded.

Worries Confuse Us

However, in your worries you are becoming befuddled and confused. You think that communism can be stopped by bullets, that socialism can be stopped by ballots, that the paternalistic state can be stopped by elections, and that governmental spending can be stopped by political pressures. But you are reckoning without grass-roots humanity.

The simple fact is that humanity, at the grass roots, has always been God's most potent influence in turning the tide from evil unto righteousness. From the days when Moses, standing before Pharaoh, cried, "Let my people go"—from then on down to the resistance movement in France and Holland, in Denmark and Norway under the nazis, the rise of greatness at the grass roots has been God's secret but irresistible weapon.

Yes, common man, grass-roots man, has the answer. But he must become something other than he is in our day if the answer is to bring salvation to our sick world. Let us look at the situation—where we have failed and where the Christian faith has succeeded. There are three false philosophies of human nature that have got us into our present predicament. There is one true philosophy of human nature that can get us out of it.

Interestingly enough, all four of these philosophies are stated by John in the prologue to his Gospel. Here are the three false philosophies: "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man." Here is the true philosophy of human nature: "but of God."

Naturalism

The first of these false philosophies is the philosophy of naturalism—that man, in his pristine state, is pure and undefiled and that, let alone, he will always seek the best. In other words, that man "born of blood," in his natural state, is adequate unto himself.

This was the philosophy popularized by Rousseau. It was the philosophical background of the

French Revolution. It was a philosophy that captured the imagination of the young Wordsworth. But after visiting France, after seeing the results of the French Revolution—how, when man was left free to follow impulse, the beast came to the top—Wordsworth went back to England disillusioned.

The naturalist believes that all the evils of the world came from civilization—from law and order, from man's control over his fellow man. Therefore, set man free and lo, the nobleness that is in him, sleeping but never dead, will rise in majesty to assert itself!

Naturalism is, to a degree, the philosophy of those who champion the free-enterprise system in industry. It is the doctrine of laissez faire—"let alone." Supply and demand will work the whole thing out. "No tinkering," they say. "Governmental tinkering," "governmental meddling" are some of their by-words.

Now if this philosophy is true—that doing what comes naturally is the open road to all good things —then we should expect to find utopia in the jungle, where there is least control. Back closest to nature where there are the fewest prohibitions, the fewest inhibitions—there we will find the ideal society. If you really believe that, there are still some unoccupied jungle lands where you can set up housekeeping.

No, the fact is that natural man, set free from all restraints, is anything but godlike. When we take that philosophy of man we always end in a jungle, whether the primeval forests of Africa or the jungle of the city slum. Not of blood!

Materialism

A second false philosophy of human nature is that man is a beast—that he is incurably selfish, incurably sensuous, incurably sadistic. Carlyle gave voice to this philosophy of human nature when he said, "Humanity is a great beast!"

If the first false philosophy sees man as a creature born only of blood, this second false philosophy sees him as a creature born only of the will of the flesh. The philosophy of naturalism overrates man; the philosophy of materialism underrates him. It appeals to him upon the fleshly basis. It sees every choice of man controlled "by the will of the flesh."

This is the philosophy popularized by Nietzsche and issuing in nazism, and the philosophy popularized by Karl Marx and issuing in communism. Man will never respond to the appeal of that which is high. He will respond only to the appeal of self-interest. His hungers, his appetites, his drives, his urges, his "libido," to quote Freud—these are what make the man.

This philosophy which underrates the nature of man has, it might be remarked in passing, become a chief stock in trade of the new deal, the fair deal, and of most of those who oppose both the new deal and the fair deal. How do we reach comman man today?

Through bribery. Get security for yourself. More money, fewer hours, more benefits—sickness, unemployment, old age, even burial benefits.

Through irritation. We bombard him over the ether waves with oft repeated slogans until his resistance is worn down. We do not appeal to his mind, to his independence of thinking and acting. We seek to overcome his "sales resistance," which is to say his independence of choice.

Through envy and covetousness. Buy this or that car or fur coat and get ahead of the Joneses.

Through flattery. Drink our brand of whisky and become a man of distinction. Accept our social or political nostrum and become Somebody.

There will be no greatness at the grass roots when we start from the premise that humanity is a great beast that must be bribed, flattered and cajoled. Not of the will of the flesh!

Totalitarianism

Third, not of the will of man. Naturalism sees man born of blood. Materialism sees man born of the will of the flesh. Totalitarianism sees man born of the will of man—man exercising control over his fellow man. Statism, collectivism, governmentalism, and the ultimate, despotism. This is the philosophy which sees man as incapable of governing himself, incapable of thinking for himself, incapable of deciding for himself. The human will holds other human wills in subjection. Politically it was the way of nazism and it is the way of communism.

These philosophies of human nature are not only materialistic, looking upon humanity as a great beast. They are also despotic. They look upon man as incapable of deciding for himself. The order is as I have stated it. They gain control by appealing to man's lower nature. Once in control, they rule with an iron rod over all of man's nature.

Ecclesiastically the philosophy of regimentation finds expression in the Roman Catholic Church. Unlike nazism, unlike communism, unlike naturalism, unlike materialism, which think of man as inherently godlike or inherently bestial, these totalitarians nevertheless think of man as inherently weak and incapable of thinking for himself. Therefore the church must do his thinking and make his decisions for him.

But it doesn't produce greatness at the grass roots. It is not by accident that the great preachers of America, Fulton J. Sheen notwithstanding, are Protestant preachers. Man controlled by the will of man can no more become a mature person than can your child if you forever keep him tied to your apron strings. Not of the will of man!

But of God! In those three simple words John states the secret of that greatness which grew out of the grass roots of common man in the days when the Christian faith first swept the earth.

Another View

How did it come about, this transformation of common man into a child of the living God? It came about through the process of culture—a word which, for all the thin and dilettante meaning we have given to it, is a simple, grass-roots

word. It is a word of the soil, of the earth, earthy. The difference between the weed patch and the formal garden is culture—cultivation.

Jesus didn't assume that man was naturally good, that born of blood he could find heaven on earth. He didn't assume that man was naturally bestial, that born of the flesh he could never be anything but a bundle of appetites. He didn't assume that man was naturally weak, that born of the will of man he must forever be under the domination of his fellow man.

No, he took this frail creature of dust and said that he could be born from above so that he could become godlike. It wouldn't happen by accident. It would happen only by intent. It was a matter of culture. Man must be made that way. But—man *could* be made that way.

Consider at the parable of the wolf and the dog suggested by Gerald Heard in one of his books. The dog, as we know him, is kin to the wolf. But across the centuries his wolflike qualities have been tamed until he has rightly been called "man's best friend." Think of the dog in his wolflike days. There were four possible ways of looking at him:

He is inherently tame; let him alone to do what comes naturally. No one would want such a pet around his house.

He is bestial; nothing can be done with him. With that attitude toward him, the dog would be a wolf to this day.

He is uncontrollable and must be kept within bound. So we would have put him in a cage, but his animal nature would have remained untamed.

He is capable of being more than a wolf. He is capable of being a household pet, man's servant and his best friend. So creative love, through endless ages, has tamed the wolflike character of the dog, has taken him out of the animal world and made him in a sense a citizen of man's world.

Our Present Need

This is what Christian faith has done with human nature, though not by the slow and laborious process of evolution as in the case of the dog. In the days of Jesus and Paul it did it by the quick process of revolution. It is doing that to the lives of individuals today, as indeed it has done in every generation.

But individual greatness here and there is not enough. There must again be a resurgence of greatness at the grass roots if the moral and social problems of our time are to be solved. As in the days following Pentecost, as in the days of the Wesleyan revival, so in our day common humanity must once more discover its kinship with God.

These modern systems of ours that seem to be collapsing under the pressures of our revolutionary age are all of them idealistic systems. They presupposed that economic, political and ecclesiastical man is capable of being set free from outward restraint. They call for greatness at the grass roots.

That's your only chance to make the free-enterprise system work. I personally believe that the free-enterprise system is best adapted to bring out the best in man. But I don't believe it has a chance of working unless there is greatness at the grass roots, unless men approach their work not as creatures of greed but as children of God, working for what our fathers were pleased to call the "commonwealth."

That's your only chance of making democracy work. I likewise believe that democracy is best adapted to bring out the best in human nature. But I don't believe it can survive much longer unless there is greatness, or at least the leaven of greatness, at the grass roots.

That's the only chance of keeping America Protestant. I believe that man, under Protestantism, is more nearly akin to man as God intended him to be than under any other ecclesiastical system. But Protestantism can't keep alive on preaching alone. It began as a movement of the people and it must continue as a movement of the people, grown great through their own individual faith in the Son of God.

You can no more make a free man's world function with the present human stuff than you can make a finely tuned airplane motor run with low-grade gasoline. A free man's world, whether in economics, politics or religion, calls for greatness at the grass roots. Only Christian faith can produce that quality of greatness.

"To them gave he the power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

Thanksgiving Day Prayer

By Warren A. Nyberg

Minister, Emmanuel Methodist Church, Montevideo, Uruguay

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, we lift up our hearts to thee, thankful for the rich heritage which is ours: a land of plenty, a country where basic freedoms find expression, a people whose life is interfused with Christian faith and aspiration. For these and many other mercies, remembered by us or forgotten, we praise thee.

By the might of thy Spirit, O God, save us from selfish use of our blessings. May we not contribute to the ills of the world by our complacency. Give us to know more and more of the compassion of thy Son, who came not to be ministered unto but to minister. So may we be used of thee in the upbuilding of nations, looking confidently to the day when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

On this hallowed day, rich in memories, let thy blessing rest upon our loved ones—in our homeland, in Korea, or wherever they may be. Knit us together with thy love which no distance can sever. Let this day of Thankgiving be blessed for each of us because we have acknowledged thee to be our God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Pulpit Post

Kennedy Perpetuates Fosdick Error

SIR: Ever since Dr. Fosdick's provocative sermon "Every Man a Gambler" appeared in print more than 15 years ago I have inwardly seethed at the idea of promoting adventurous faith under the symbolism of games of chance. Now comes Bishop Kennedy ("Wanted: Christian Gamblers," in the August Pulpit) who, doubtless with the best intentions in the world, wants to perpetuate the same error.

Of course faith involves risk. From the beginning of the Christian movement men have "hazarded their lives" for Christ. But there is all the difference in the world between the worthy risks that faith involves and the desire to "risk or wager something of value upon a chance," which is the way my dictionary defines the verb "gamble."

However clever or thought-provoking the idea may appear to some, I question the wisdom of its use. To me it smacks somewhat of blasphemy to suggest that a comparison may be made between the soldiers who cast lots for Christ's garments and the so-called "heroic gamble" of "the strange man on the cross." And to picture God himself as a gambler because of the "risks" he takes in "daring to grant men liberty" suggests to me a very unbiblical conception of the basic doctrine of the sovereignty of God. Surely we can present the gospel forcefully and attractively to the modern mind without using the questionable "gambler" analogy.

Please let me add that Bishop Kennedy has written many other things which have inspired and helped me and for which I am deeply grateful.

First Presbyterian, J. MALCOLM MURCHISON.
Clarksville, Tenn.

Practical Problem

SIR: The sermon of Dr. Carnell (May Pulpit) is "good and righteous altogether." But I wonder if he does not forget some practical considerations. Publishers will continue to issue Bibles and if they cannot print the new revised version, because of copyright and other restrictions, they will print versions they can print. So why not open the printing to all publishers, reduce the price to conform with other editions, and make the new translation widely available? Until all publishers are free to print the translation I'm afraid circulation and use will be limited.

I doubt very much the oft repeated statement concerning the sanctity and beauty of the King James translation. Older people cling to the familiar. Young people do not. So why not give the new translation the widest possible opportunity to be used?

St. Matthew's Lutheran, W. R. SIEGART.
Reading, Pa.

Emurian Gets Told

SIR: Although I agree with Mr. Emurian's thesis in his column in the August Pulpit, that "a fine collection of music can be a boon to the choir and a blessing to the finance committee," I certainly do not agree with the examples of such collections which he suggests.

With one exception (Mead's "Great Hymns with Descants") they are loaded with slushy, sentimental trash which ought to have been buried quietly 20 or even 40 years ago. Such things as "The Palms" (Faure), "Jerusalem" (Parker), "Send Out Thy Light" (Gounod), "Seek Ye the Lord" (Roberts), "The Holy City" (Adams), "Calvary" (Rodney), and "Eye Hath Not Seen" (Gaul) are typical of the tired old war horses which clutter up the library of most church choirs. They never were very good music in the first place, and their continued use burdens our worship services with something which is cheap and vulgar.

There is plenty of good music available for the "small nonprofessional choir" to which Mr. Emurian refers, including some good collections (names available on request). And more such good music would be sung in our churches if our ministers were alert to their responsibilities, and adequately trained in the appreciation and understanding of good music. The average parish minister tolerates in his choir loft cheapness, vulgarity, sentimentalism and downright trashiness which he would not dream of indulging in his pulpit.

St. Luke's Lutheran, CHARLES P. SMITH.
Huntington Park, Calif.

In Defense of Enslin

SIR: One doesn't have to be a hen to know whether an omelette is good or bad. I don't care whether Enslin can preach or not. I do know that he has the power to make us see ourselves as others see us. His value to me lies in the fact that his articles *are* "writ sarcastical." (I've lost the source of this quote. Perhaps Enslin can do a column on that type of pulpit plundering!) Enslin hasn't said much that others haven't said before him. It's the way he says them that gets under my hide. I can shrug off saccharine-coated pious advice of others who write for those who are not "children." But the pompous side of me gets a good deflating from an Enslin barb.

May I suggest to Enslin critics that they take him with a large dose of a sense of humor? He can make us laugh at ourselves; and when he does that, he has cured us. Enslin has scored me off, too. He has made me laugh at myself. And he has cured me.

Any attempt to throttle Enslin's sarcastic style would be a disservice to the thousands of us who are still "children" at heart—even in the pulpit.

United Presbyterian, WILLIAM A. MUIR.
Earlham, Iowa.

SIR: Please assure Morton S. Enslin that his contributions to The Pulpit are appreciated not only for what he writes but also for the way he writes it. As a master of the serious and practical permeated with delicate and delightful humor he is in that rare brotherhood headed, many of us think, by Simeon Stylites. To call it a "sarcastic, know-it-all way" of writing is to be afflicted with a most amazing deficiency in understanding.

Congregational Church, JOHN C. PRYOR.
Weeping Water, Nebr.

THE REAL CULPRIT

(Editorial in the *United Presbyterian*, June 18)

IN the June issue of The Pulpit—A Journal of Contemporary Preaching, a widely-read publication, is a sermon which may appropriately be described in colloquial phraseology as "a corker." The title is "The Real Culprit," and the preacher is Dr. Ansley C. Moore, pastor of our Sixth United Presbyterian church, Pittsburgh. The sermon is a straight-from-the-shoulder discussion of the revelations of the Kefauver committee. Dr. Moore mentions such witnesses as Frank Costello, and the Carrolls, the Clancys, the O'Dwyers, the Morans, but he declares that *the real culprit is the indifferent public.* The preacher then proceeds to run down a list through money-lovers, selfish business men, public officials, opportunists, partisans, chiselers, professing patriots who fail to vote in public elections, easy-going citizens who say, "You can't do anything about it—forget it!" respectable church people who emphasize creed rather than character—until he gets to *you* and to *myself*, the *indifferent public.*

The preacher is right, and there is no use in trying to dodge the unpleasant truth. In the early years of our ministry in Pittsburgh, we heard of a good old United Presbyterian elder who never failed, in his public prayers, to utter the words, "Lord, thou knowest we are all pore sinners!" The elder was unquestionably on the right track. There is time for us professing Christians, who belong to the *indifferent public,* to repent, to awaken, and *in our own communities* to prove ourselves worthy champions of all that is just and right and true. Dr. Moore's sermon contains a very illuminating discussion of the ethics of gambling. We wish that the discourse might have much wider circulation than is afforded by The Pulpit.

QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

Sermons Preached at Riverside Church

by ROBERT J. MCCRACKEN

Dr. McCracken is famed for more than being Harry Emerson Fosdick's successor at Riverside Church. Since assuming the position of minister there he has become much in demand as preacher and lecturer all over the country. Here is the first book of sermons by one of the most eminent ministers in North America. Their author has called them "life-situation" preaching, but it is also biblical and topical preaching of the highest order. The titles have been detemined by the questions personally put to Dr. McCracken at Riverside and elsewhere. Together they form a total view of Christianity both edifying and inspiring:

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Can We Believe in a Personal God?
How Does One Learn to Pray?
What Is the Case for Personal Survival?
How Does One Acquire Religious Experience?
Why Does God Hide Himself?
Is the Christian Ideal Attainable?
Where Can We Find Security?
How Does One Get on Top of Irritability and Depression?
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Speaking to Students

By Lewis H. Chrisman

ABOUT twenty years ago there came from the press a delightful volume by Cornelius H. Patton and Walter T. Field dealing with New England college life in the eighties, *Eight O'Clock Chapel.* The eight o'clock aspect of the title is interesting but not particularly important. For many years those who arrange schedules have regarded later hours as more suitable for college assemblies. Yet eight o'clock represented progress. In the remote twenties of the 19th century, Franklin Pierce, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow as students at Bowdoin College took for granted that they were to be called out of bed for "prayers just before sunrise." *Eight O'Clock Chapel* is not only a happily selected title, but the very word chapel suggests the part of college life about which the memories of the students of that generation were most likely to center.

How large does the chapel loom in the memories of present-day students? For some of them it does not figure at all. But it is also true that in this collegiate year thousands of young people are attending chapel and are receiving from it more inspiration and illumination than many of them realize. As recent an issue of *School and Society* as that of June 19, 1948, contained an article on the chapel by Prof. Ernest Knautz of Baldwin-Wallace College entitled "The Heart of the College." There is no doubt whatever that a strong case can be made for the chapel as "the heart of the college." Its elimination would mean a hiatus in the educational program which would be difficult to fill. To point out the weaknesses of chapel does not take a vast amount of thought or knowledge. To suggest a workable substitute would be a considerably harder job requiring a far higher degree of intelligence.

Chapel Speaker

This article has to do only with the application of the principles of public speaking to addresses made to the young people who gather in college chapels. The larger problems, however, always lurk in the background, and it is hard to think about any phase of the subject without having allied topics obtruding themselves. Kenneth I. Brown in an article, "College Standards," in the *Journal of Higher Education* (April 1939) put a vast amount of wisdom into two sentences:

> With a worshipful, dignified, intellectually respectable program and a speaker whose words and personality utter the same message, the chapel can be a means of raising moral and religious standards. Whether attendance be required or voluntary seems to me a trivial point to be decided according to the campus situation.

But what about this speaker whose language and personality should be

of one mold? What should he say? How should he say it? How can he be dignified without being boring? In what special way should a college audience be approached? These are but a few of the questions that raise their heads. Anyone attempted to answer all of them would be rushing where angels fear to tread. Anything I say about college chapel addresses is based on experience. For approximately forty years, as a student and as a teacher, I have listened to them. I have seen the college chapel at its worst and at its best, sometimes in the same week.

Same Rules Apply

The same principles that underlie all effective speaking apply to chapel addresses. A good speech ties up with the thought and problems of the audience to which it is given. This means that the sermon which was so highly commended the Sunday before will not always meet the needs of a student body. Whatever their limitations, students are not easy to delude with purple spots of unthinking eloquence. And there are certain topics of considerable interest to many congregations concerning which the members of a college audience neither know nor care. Addresses prepared for older groups are likely to fall flat when warmed over for college use. Many a public speaker has been disappointed because material which proved acceptable in one place failed in another. A basic law of public speaking is that the speaker should have as thorough a knowledge as possible of the interests and needs of those who sit before him. Sometimes unusual vitality of personality, breadth of material and exceptional platform skill can bridge wide gaps, but as a general rule the man who does not have a special knowledge of student life and thought is not at home on a chapel platform.

Here a heavy responsibility devolves upon those who select chapel speakers. Many a student audience has suffered—not patiently—on account of having to listen to some loyal supporter of the college or some good friend of a member of the program committee. The choice of speakers here as elsewhere should be determined by the ability of those under consideration to render the particular service needed. To put a man in the wrong place is never a kindness to him. Neither is it fair to those who are compelled to listen to him.

Number One Danger

Each area of public speaking has its own danger point. One of the besetting sins of the chapel speech is the tendency to cultivate a superprofundity. It is easy to reason that since a college is an institution of learning, anybody who speaks from its platform should dive deep. This error has spoiled many a good address. Occasionally faculty members have been innocently involved in such a debacle. The speaker has talked to them rather than to the more important part of the audience. A chapel service is not for the faculty but for the students. A term paper which has survived from the speaker's seminary days may have its merits, but it is a pathetically poor substitute for a chapel address. A speech to students can be genuinely intelligent, inspiring and helpful without being a monstrosity of pseudo erudition or spurious profundity.

But the other besetting sin of the chapel speaker is much more frequent and even more serious. It is the tendency to play down to the groundlings with an assumption of rollicking goodfellowship. Skill in the use of humor is one of the pre-eminent characteristics of good speaking. Heaviness is no platform virtue. A boring speech is a poor one. But humor is a highly dangerous weapon unless skillfully used. At its best it is a by-product. From its very nature it is not forced but spontaneous. There is a great gulf between it and low comedy. College students are not children to be pleased with a rattle and tickled with a straw. A chapel program should be educative rather than merely amusing. The worst failures I ever heard from college platforms came from an exag-

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LEWIS H. CHRISMAN is professor of English at West Virginia Wesleyan College, Buckhannon, W. Va. A frequent contributor to The Pulpit, he brings to this article a background of 40 years of listening to and making chapel talks.

gerated "fear of that which is high," a straining to pose as an especially good fellow, neither too pious nor too intellectual.

But I can hardly leave this corner of the subject without mentioning my chief antipathy among the forensic blunders I have seen committeed in academic halls. This is the case of the speaker who stands before his audience with a somewhat sickly grin, combining embarrassment and forced benignity, and in tones of patient understanding begins, "Not many years ago I was a student like you, and I know what it is to have to listen to tedious chapel speeches," and so on *ad infinitum* and *ad nauseum*. My chief objection to this clinché is its bad ethics. It is an effort on the part of the speaker to ingratiate himself with his audience at the expense of those who have preceded and those who will follow him. It says in effect: "I am not going to bore you like most of these tedious professors and long-winded preachers."

No Apology Needed

Such an attitude tends to break down chapel morale, which possibly some of those boring college officials had been working hard to build up. Also, it is egregiously bad tacts from the speaker's own point of view. The fact is that this particular device has been used so often that the upperclassmen have heard it time after time, to say nothing of the long-suffering faculty. Everybody there—except some brand-new freshman, in case the performance takes place in the fall—knows that it is an inane bromide branding the one who uses it as a neophyte in that area of public speaking. Possibly the ethical opacity of this type of beginning carries its own punishment with it.

But these errors of judgment should not be allowed to distort our perspective. Without trying I could mention scores of chapel addresses which I shall never forget and which have made indubitable contributions to my life. For divers reasons students today complain more about chapel than they once did. My own college generation took it somewhat as a matter of course. I wonder, though, if it will not hold as large a place in the memories of the amiably rebellious youth of today as it holds in those of their more docile predecessors.

The one illustration of a lasting impression made by a chapel service upon a student which I allow myself to use does not have to do with an address. One morning in the long-ago days of 1908 Pres. George Edward Reed of Dickinson College read the twelfth chapter of Romans. Later in the day one of my classmates who had never especially noticed before these noble words of the great Apostle to the Gentiles spoke of hearing them with something of the thrill of a discoverer—

like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken.

(Continued on page 23)

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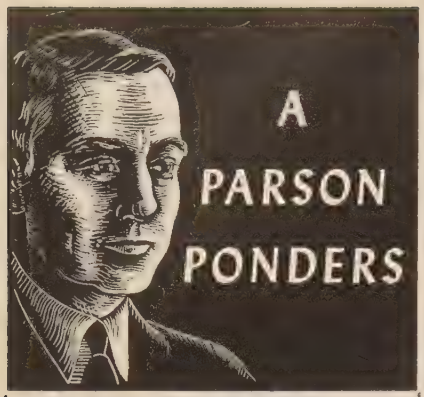

"The Vogue of the Vague" never ceases to cause wonder. That which cannot be understood acquires, for some, a special virtue. George Ades' fable comes to mind in which he tells of a minister who felt he needed a larger salary. So he preached a sermon replete with unintelligible words. Immediately an awed congregation raised his stipend.

Belief gets confused with credulity when it is assumed that one must believe what he cannot see clearly at once, but which a little effort would make plain. Faith in what cannot be seen is reasonable. Acceptance without examination of ideas that can be understood is something else.

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"More than a Business—an Institution"

Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

'Lest God Be Angry at Thy Voice'

I REMEMBER well a woman who was distinctly concerned at the conclusion of a communion service by the fact that several of her fellow members had not entirely emptied their little glasses. Was this not in direct violation of the word of the Lord, which had just a moment before been solemnly repeated: "Drink ye *all* of it"?

My attempt to console her with the assurance that "all" did not refer here to the wine but to the participants and that the ambiguity was not present in the Greek was quite unsuccessful. I was more fortunate when I reminded her that surely at the meal in the yesteryears which we had just sought to memorialize they had not used individual glasses but had drunk from a common cup and that accordingly it could scarcely have been expected that each should drain it.

It would be easy to dismiss the incident as trivial—as it was—though surely it was regrettable that the service had left the good woman in a condition to be concerned about such a detail. To me it was important, and I have never forgotten it. Through the years I have not infrequently wondered how many other words in Scripture lessons and sermons have been similarly misunderstood, and sometimes with even more unfortunate results.

After one morning service at which I preached, a member of the church mentioned to me an experience he had had as a boy which had for years made him dread going into the meetinghouse. The minister had read in the morning lesson the Johannine account of the cleansing of the temple, which called to the disciples' memory the word of old, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Said my friend: "It was a long time before I discovered that the 'zeal' was not some sort of awful animal that might get me." That too does not seem funny to me, nor did I sit in judgment on my friend's veracity. To be sure, I had heard almost identical stories since boyhood. But here was a man whom I had no slightest reason to accuse of falsehood assuring me that this had been his experience.

It would be easy to dismiss the incident also as trivial and not worth bothering about. But I can't do it. Whenever I write a sermon or select a passage to be read, I invariably proofread it ultracarefully to see if there are any booby traps lurking in innocent-sounding words. There are many such—and some of them not of the kind to turn into little funny stories for polite ears.

I am not thinking of the uncouth phrases of the more lusty yesteryears which still survive in the pages of the King James, and which the man of taste would not choose to employ in his pulpit. (A glance at I Kings 14:10 should satisfy any doubting Thomases that there really are such. I am not concerned with them—the words, not the Thomases. It may be presumed that readers of The Pulpit do not need suggestions that paraphrases in these cases are not only wise but easy. If they did need the suggestion, they probably would not take it anyhow.)

Rather I am thinking of phrases which, though themselves quite innocent, are of a nature to suggest to some ears a meaning quite remote from what the original writer or the modern minister intended. To put it bluntly, there are a good many cases where words and phrases may either be deliberately misunderstood or easily punned or parodied, with consequences which can be unfortunate. It may be that to the pure all things are pure. It is a fine thing for a minister to be pure-minded. But that does not mean that he should needlessly or heedlessly blind his eyes to the fact that there are likely to be those in his pews who can and will twist an innocent or unfortunate word or phrase which provides a possible double meaning, in a way by no means wholesome for them. Without being more specific, I would suggest that when you read the story of Paul's conversion, as he is reported to have recounted it to King Agrippa, you be very sure that the divine word, which Paul says he heard, had warned him of the folly of kicking against goads.

It would appear to me—in part from my own observation, in part from conversations with other ministers who do not, I am sure, enjoy aimless paddling in the cesspools of life—that there are many cases where clergymen may well observe the old adage that they be "wise as serpents." I for one have no desire to incur the charge of needlessly causing any of God's little ones—and he has a tremendous number of them, both young and old—to be offended. In fact, it

is precisely this concern which has led me to venture a word which I believe is long overdue—even at the risk of offending some of my readers through seeming to them to be in doubtful taste.

Chrisman

(Continued from page 21)

Years later when we met on the old campus at our twentieth class reunion he recalled the spiritual adventure of that winter morning. Some student experiences in chapel last as long as life itself.

Religious Emphasis Timely

The religious emphasis which traditionally focuses in the college chapel service fits into one of the most important trends of contemporary educational thinking. The widely discussed movement known as "general education" takes the position that a college education means more than cramming the mind with selected odds and ends of knowledge. It holds that a youth should be given the kind of education which will develop his character, personality and intelligence and fit him as an individual and a citizen to take an enlightened and responsible part in meeting the problems of our day. This kind of education includes religion.

To say that religion has a place in this spiritual and moral development would simply be repeating what has been accepted through the generations. And the college chapel has been, and shall continue to be, a vital factor in conserving and teaching these eternal ethical and spiritual values. This means that it should not be regarded as a matter of going through perfunctory motions or making pious gestures. What is said there should be real, illuminating, creative.

God and Our Century

A Sermon Summary

Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.—Matt. 3:2.

THE 20th century, called by some the most crucial in man's history, has thus far displayed four stages in the relationship of man to God.

Ours was first an age of complacency. Material prosperity and world peace caused optimism to run high. In such an atmosphere, it was easy for man to believe that he no longer needed God. Self-sufficiency thus became the prevailing mood.

Smug complacency was followed by paralyzing crisis. There was first a crisis among men. The dream of world peace was shattered by World Wars I and II. The bubble of economic prosperity was burst by the crash of 1929. These events provided the setting for the crisis within man. Driven in upon himself by wars, depressions and atrocities, man looked within to echo the words of Edna St. Vincent Millay:

A man may go to war—go to his first war,
that is, out of confusion, but to go to war twice
Indicates either callousness, or vice.

Out of crisis, however, has come crusade. There has been the *crusade for truth*, the foundation for which was laid by the philosopher Soren Kierkegaard and the theological message of which has been brought by Karl Barth and those stirred by him. Like John the Baptist, Barth's message (reviving the great Christian beliefs) has called us to new repentance and new depths of thought. Inevitably, this crusade has been followed by the crusade for the souls of men. Visitation evangelism has caught the imagination of the church and mass evangelism in a more appealing form is being employed. One sees the spirit of God literally at work among the hearts of men.

The fourth phase is consolidation. There must be the consolidation of a well rounded faith—for example, the meeting of critical social issues (a Christian weakness laid bare by the Communists) in the midst of our present evangelistic emphasis. And there must be the consolidation of those who are won—their integration and active participation in the life of the church.

With God in Christ as our leader, complacency and crisis can be followed not by collapse, but by crusade and consolidation. Thus the crucial 20th century may truly become God's century.—*John J. Bunting, Jr., Newark Methodist, Newark, Del.*

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Pulpit Paragraphs

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

THERE was a Scotchman who had quit going to church for one reason or another. One evening the minister came to this man's house to make a call. He was let into the house without a word. Both men sat down in heavy silence. After a while the clergyman got up from his chair and walked over to the fireplace where a fire of coals was burning brightly. He picked up the poker from its stand alongside the open hearth. Separating a single coal from the glowing mass, he pushed it to one side away from the other coals. In short order the coal lost its glow, turned blue and cold, and went out. The pastor looked at his hitherto silent host, and then heard these word: "I'll be in kirk next Lord's Day!"—*Herman J. Kregel, Post Chaplain, U.S.M.A., West Point, N. Y.*

• *Lost Glow*

• *Freedom Can Be Lost*

ALTHOUGH freedom is a living, positive thing, recent history teaches us that people are little concerned about it until they lose it. They innocently trade bits and pieces of their freedom for the illusion that "social gains" are permanent, dynamic and tangible.

This reminds me of Somerset Maugham's observation: "If a nation values anything more than freedom it will lose its freedom; and the irony of it is that if it is comfort or money that it values more, it will lose that, too." —*Claude A. Putnam, President, National Association of Manufacturers.*

• *In the Family Tradition*

IN that delightful book *Yankee from Olympus*, the biography of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, there is a picture of young Holmes who has left Harvard University to join the Union army and play his part in the tragic war between the states. On his first Sunday away from home his company encamped outside Washington, D. C. Young Holmes' grandfather was a minister. His own father, a doctor and author of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, was a regular worshiper at old King's Chapel in Boston. On this first Sunday away from home, young Holmes left his company and walked away to be alone at the worship hour, to think of his folks and to write home to them. His letter is classic. He told his father and mother that it is good for him to know that every Sunday at eleven he knows that they will be in old King's Chapel, in the same pew, worshiping. He said he would set aside that particular time on the Sabbath, wherever he was, if not engaged in battle, to be in fellowship and communion not only with God but also with his family. No wonder the old Autocrat of the Breakfast Table wrote, "There is a little plant called reverence within my heart and it needs watering at least once a week."—*Frank A. Court, St. Paul Methodist, Lincoln, Neb.*

Pulpit Calendar

Nov. 1—All Saints Day.
Nov. 2—All Souls Day; World Community Day (Sponsored by the United Church Women).
Nov. 4—Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost.
Nov. 11—Twenty-sixth Sunday after Pentecost; Armistice Day; Men and Missions Sunday.
Nov. 18—Twenty-seventh Sunday after Pentecost.
Nov. 25—Twenty-eighth Sunday after Pentecost; Stewardship Day.
Dec. 2—Advent Sunday.
Dec. 9—Second Sunday in Advent; Universal Bible Sunday.
Dec. 16—Third Sunday in Advent.
Dec. 23—Sunday before Christmas.
Dec. 24—Christmas Eve: Hanukah (Jewish).
Dec. 25—Christmas.
Dec. 30—Sunday after Christmas.
Dec. 31—New Year's Eve (Watch Night).
Jan. 1—New Year's Day; Festival of the Christening.
Jan. 5—Twelfth Night; Epiphany Eve.
Jan. 6—Epiphany.
Jan. 7—First Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 14—Second Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 21—Third Sundy after Epiphany.
Jan. 28—Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.

SEASONS: Kingdomtide, Advent Christmastide, and Epiphany.

ALTAR COLORS: Kingdomtide, green; All Saints Day, white; Advent through Christmas Eve, violet; Christmas through the Octave of Epiphany, white.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of nationwide or denominational significance.)

• *Without Apology*

BERTRAND RUSSELL, Nobel Prize winner and distinguished philosopher, lectured at Columbia University in November 1950. His brilliant mind traced the impact of science on contemporary society. In the first of three lectures, Philosopher Russell rather thoroughly dismissed the Christian conception of God. Yet the third lecture brings a strange conclusion. He is enumerating the things and conditions which are necessary if our scientific age is to be relatively happy and stable. Like so many people, he accepts the gift without the Giver. For here are his words, as a *New York Times* reporter caught them:

"The root of the matter is a very simple and old-fashioned thing, a thing so simple that I am almost ashamed to mention it, for fear of the derisive smile with which wise cynics will greet my words. The thing I mean—please forgive me for mentioning it—is love, Christian love, compassion. If you feel this you have a motive for existence, a guide in action, and a reason for courage."

You and I as Christians need not be so apologetic. We can say with the brilliant mind of the first Christian philosopher in a day before Nobel prizes, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation."—*Roger J. Squire, First Methodist, Red Bank, N. J.*

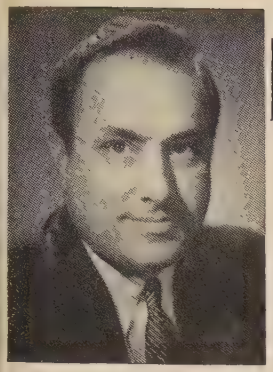
• *Something Happened Inside*

IN *A Guide to Confident Living* which has been a best seller for over two years, and not without reason, Norman Vincent Peale closes with the story of a newspaper editor. This man, a native of Canada, was born with a withered leg. From childhood on he always wore a brace, and as he grew up he learned that he couldn't run and climb trees and play like other boys his age. Finally he developed a brace of fears on his mind that was even worse than the brace on his leg. The latter could at least be taken off when he came into the house. One day his father said, "Son, don't worry about that leg of yours. Some day I'm going to take you into the cathedral and there before the great altar God will heal you."

The great day came. They reverently entered the church and came down the aisle hand in hand, the little boy dragging his withered leg along. They knelt at the altar. The father said, "Son, pray and ask God to heal you." They both prayed. At long last the father put his hand on the boy's shoulder and said with deep feeling, "Son, let us give thanks to God. You are healed."

The boy was profoundly impressed. He stood up and looked down—and there was his leg, the same as before. The lad was deeply disappointed. They came almost to the door of the cathedral. Then the man who was telling the story said: "I stopped dead still, for all of a sudden I felt something tremendously warm in my heart. Then I seemed to feel something like a great hand pass across my head and touch me. To this day I can feel the delicacy and yet the strength of the touch. All of a sudden I was wondrously happy and I cried out, 'Father, you are right. I have been healed!'"

(Continued on page 27)



Ministry of Music

By Ernest K. Emurian

An Open Letter

An open letter to the Department of Worship, The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America:

GENTLEMEN: Here is a job you can tackle with enthusiasm and gusto. There is need for a standardized hymnal for the churches which constitute your body. This need has been evident for several generations. If all the money spent by various denominational publishing houses on editions, revisions and printings of their separate hymnals and songbooks during the past fifty years had been concentrated on the preparation and publication of one standard over-all hymnal for all the participating churches, the amount saved would stagger the imagination, and the waste thus revealed would appal the average churchgoer.

Roman Catholics take pride in the fact that their mass is the same throughout the world; hence Catholics feel at home in any and every church of their denomination. Such universality is appealing. Protestants can learn a valuable lesson from it. We have the same Scripture. Eventually the long awaited Revised Standard Version of the entire Bible will be found in every Protestant church. It may take as long a time as did acceptance of the Authorized Version of 1611. But the diehards will eventually die, and the future of this latest and best version will be assured.

So why not the same hymnal? It is not as impossible as it may seem at first. Of the 400,000 available hymns and songs of the faith, less than half are in the English language. Of that number, less than 1,000 are known by average churchgoers, while the most familiar and best loved of them all number possibly 200 to 300. Yet the hymnals published by the various houses contain between 600 and 800 selections. A poll of a fair cross section of Protestant clergy and laity would almost certainly reveal that 1,000 hymns and gospel songs would meet the needs of most English-speaking and -singing churches in the United States. A 60-40 or even 70-30 proportion between hymns and gospel songs would about include all of either anyone would ever care to sing.

Average church members ought to sing more and better hymns; but they don't! Despite the artistic merits of many hymnals, they are weighed in the balance of practical use and found wanting. Little two-line fillers (used to fill left-over space when a six-line hymn such as "Stand Up for Jesus" is printed with four lines on one page and two lines at the top of the following page) are avoided like the plague. The space allotted to them could well be left blank for sanctified doodling during a dull sermon of a Sunday evening. Try as conscientious ministers, song-leaders and choirs may, congregations seem immune to many supposedly excellent hyms, despite repeated hours devoted to serious instruction and interpretation. The hymns don't "catch on," and if they don't the reflection is certainly as much upon the hymn as upon the singers.

What a relief it would be to enter

(Continued on page 27)

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AWARDS

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Second Selection

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RULES GOVERNING THE SELECTION

1. Any member of the senior class of a participating theological seminary in the United States or Canada who is less than thirty (30) years of age is eligible for selection.
2. A participating theological seminary is one which notifies The Pulpit in writing not later than March 1, 1952 that, by official action of the faculty, the seminary desires to participate in the selection and agrees to the following rules:
   (a) Each participating seminary will appoint a local committee of judges, composed of not less than three (3) members, who shall carefully consider all candidates for the selection.
   (b) Candidates shall be judged on the following bases: content and construction of sermon submitted, 60 percent; delivery and pulpit poise, 30 percent; personableness of the candidate, 10 percent.
   (c) All sermons must be original and not previously published.
   (d) The local committee of judges will nominate to The Pulpit not later than March 15, 1952 the names of not more than three (3) eligible candidates for the selection together with the sermon submitted by each of the candidates, in duplicate typewritten copies, and a statement of not more than 200 words describing each candidate's delivery, pulpit poise and personableness. All nominations will be addressed to The Board of Judges, c/o The Pulpit, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill. All manuscripts submitted become the property of The Pulpit. None will be returned.
3. No nominations postmarked later than midnight, March 15, 1952 will be eligible for consideration.
4. The selection of the Seminarian Preacher off the Year will be made by a Board of Judges whose decisions will be final.

Inquiries Concerning the Selection should be addressed to

THE PULPIT

407 S. DEARBORN STREET **CHICAGO 5, ILLINOIS**

Emurian

(Continued from page 25)

a church and see "The Bible" and "The Hymnal." No longer would a Presbyterian wonder why a book is called "The Methodist Hymnal" just because that particular church prepared it and its publishing house printed it, when it contains hyms and songs from all the sister denominations. The Episcopalians had the good grace to call their 1940 edition merely "The Hymnal." Since in Christ there is no Episcopalian or Reformed, no Baptist or Lutheran, why harp on these unessential differences?

Consider what a boon this would be. What a relief to know that in whatever church one worships, Hymn 16 is always "Holy, Holy, Holy" and 384 is always "Take Time to be Holy." Of course, vested interests would fight against this proposal. Their opposition is to be expected. The idea that the National Council should buy up copyrights on hymns and songs would cause many an ecclesiastical cold war and hot fight. The profits which various publishing houses enjoy from the sale of their particular hymnals would have to be sacrificed—a sacrifice few may be willing to make. But many will join with me in urging that your department disregard this type of opposition and proceed to set up whatever organization may be necessary to produce a truly ecumenical hymnal. It would be for the good of the church as a whole.

Pulpit Paragraphs

(Continued from page 24)

Boy that he was, he was wise enough to know what had happened. He said, "God hadn't taken the brace off my leg, but he had taken the brace off my mind."—*Herman J. Kregel, Post Chaplain, United States Military Academy, West Point, N. Y.*

• *'His Eye Was Not Dimmed'*

NELSON Glueck, in his fine book *The River Jordan*, closes with the picture of Moses standing alone on the summit of Mount Nebo—alone, except for the companionship and call of God whom he had never forsaken. "At last, the realization of a generation's striving, the accomplishment of an agony of effort, the fulfillment of driving dreams for freedom! But not for you, O Moses. Your work is done. For you, this is journey's end. The stream of life is entering the sea of death.

"See how the Jordan builds for itself a curving delta to prolong for yet a forlorn while the length of it course. There! Its race is run. The muddy river has reached and merged with the lifeless flood of the Dead Sea."

Mr. Glueck should not have used the dying of the Jordan in the Dead Sea as a symbol of Moses on the mountain. He forgets a tremendous scene that takes place many centuries later on the snow-crowned heights of Mount Hermon, on the northern extremity of the Promised Land. To be sure, Moses had to die without setting foot in it. But he claimed it, none the less; and centuries later, on the Mount of Transfiguration, he met his Lord, and there his vision was fulfilled.

From Mount Nebo to Mount Hermon —from bitter disappointment to ultimate fulfillment of all our "driving dreams"—for this the Christian hopes; and the orbit of his hope soars wide beyond the bounds of earthly life. When we have committed our lives to Christ and belong to Him in loving devotion, there is no defeat, no final disappointment. Perhaps Moses sensed that, as he stood alone on Mount Nebo and surveyed the good land he so wanted to possess but could not. Perhaps God gave Moses the faith to see that one day he would meet his Lord on that far distant highland. For we read that "His eye was not dimmed." —*Owen Hutchison, Silverlake Community Presbyterian, Los Angeles, Calif.*

Every thinking layman should read the article on page 2 and the column on page 29. Send us the names and addresses of such laymen, enclose 30 cents for each order, and we will mail them marked copies.

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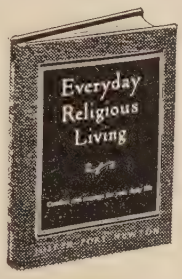

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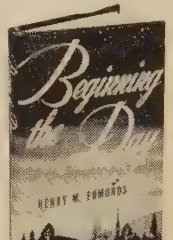

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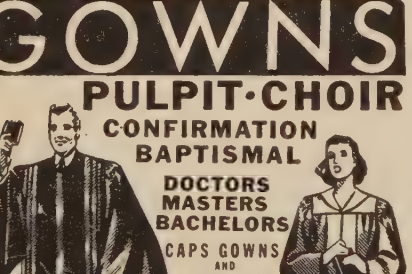

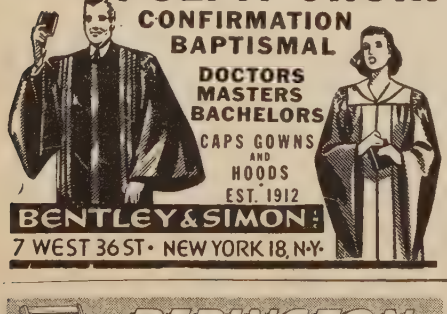

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Come Let Us Worship

By Clarence Seidenspinner

The Pastoral Prayer

FOR the pastor interested in the worship of the church, one of the most valuable little books to be published this year is *A Book of Pastoral Prayers*, by Ernest Fremont Tittle (Abingdon-Cokesbury, $1.50). Throughout his ministry Dr. Tittle was encouraged to publish some of his prayers. Steadfastly he resisted this temptation, but shortly before his death he made a selection of prayers for this book. It was published posthumously, together with an article that he had written for *Religion in Life* on the nature of the pastoral prayer.

For those of us who knew Dr. Tittle, the publication of this book is an occasion of deep rejoicing. It goes without saying that he was a superb preacher, but the worshipers in his Sunday morning congregation also knew that he was a great priest. When he stood up to read the lesson, which was followed by his pastoral prayer, the hearts of his people were deeply moved. He had wonderful ability to gather up the fears and hopes, the thanksgivings and lamentations, the petitions and intercessions of the people and present them to God. Many a worshiper found amazing peace of mind during these moments of prayer. After they were comforted, he was ready to repeat the words of the Nunc Dimittis, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."

The article on the pastoral prayer ought to be read most carefully by every pastor in the country, no matter how humble or exalted his position, for it is true, as Dr. Tittle says in this article, "that to neglect the pastoral prayer is to be guilty of a serious sin of omission." He might also have added that to neglect the pastoral prayer is to miss one of the great avenues of ministry that will bring peace to men.

Dr. Tittle discusses the relative merits of free and liturgical prayer. He believes that both are necessary in Protestant worship today. He then offers some helpful suggestions regarding the preparation of the pastoral prayer. Choice of words, he feels, is important—words that are simple and Anglo-Saxon in origin, nouns and verbs in preference to adjectives. Various forms of prayer are discussed—the collect, the litany and others. These are definitely helpful suggestions from a great master craftsman who spent untold labor and skill upon the preparation of his own pastoral prayers.

Readers of Dr. Tittle's book will be most grateful for the collection of prayers it contains. There are six groupings: 1. Prayers of a general nature. 2. Prayers for certain days in the Christian year, such as the various Sundays in Advent and Christmastide, Epiphany, the Sundays of Lent, the great days of Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost. 3. Intercessions for various subjects and occasions, such as Thanksgiving Day, Labor Day, world peace; prayers for the sick, the dying, the bereaved and the departed. 4. Prayers for the Church of God. 5. Prayers based upon various clauses of the Lord's Prayer. 6. Litanies for Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, for Christian World Missions and World Peace. These are the prayers that Dr. Tittle used in the great First Methodist church, of Evanston: pastoral prayers which followed the reading of the lesson and special prayers such as the litanies which he prepared for some of the festival celebrations at First Church.

The minister who desires really to get to work on the matter of the pastoral prayer will find of particular help the sections on general prayers and prayers for certain days in the Christian year. These can be studied repeatedly in order that their concepts, their expression and their pattern may become part of his nature. Their concepts arise from a true priestly spirit which moves with sympathy and imagination through the congregational life. Their expression is simple and clear and in a manner that might be called liturgical poetry, which finds its own free cadences and rhythmic movements.

The pattern of these prayers will bear repeated study. Some are of a free and general nature, giving expression to the free play of association. Others are more definitely stylized—a series of thanksgivings, a series of petitions with statement of mental condition and group needs, a series of expressions of rejoicing or hope. Here are wonderful examples of the varied forms a pastoral prayer may take. Many of Dr. Tittle's prayers achieve the status of literature. All are full of meaning.

Preachers in Print

Brother Pastor: Please Forward

Chairman of the Official Board,
Anytown Protestant Church,
Anytown, America.
My dear Sir,

May I take the liberty of calling to your attention the most important set of books for pastors published in recent years? It is ★★★★ THE INTERPRETER'S BIBLE, a 12-volume commentary published by the Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. Only one volume is now available, but the others will follow over the next five years. The complete set will represent years of labor by a distinguished editorial board headed by **George A. Buttrick**, pastor of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York City. Among the consulting editors is The Pulpit's own **Charles Clayton Morrison.** Contributors include Pulpit editorial associates **Oscar F. Blackwelder, Harold A. Bosley, Gerald Kennedy, Ralph W. Sockman** and Pulpit columnist **Morton S. Enslin.** You can be sure that any venture with which these men are associated is a worthwhile one. A further token of that is the fact that the Methodist Abingdon-Cokesbury Press has put a million dollars in a commentary edited by a Presbyterian and contributed to by the leading scholars of Christendom, irrespective of denomination.

By now you are probably asking yourself why this letter is addressed to you. There is a very good reason. The first volume of this new commentary, Volume VII which contains general articles on the New Testament and the commentaries on Matthew and Mark, sells for $8.75. The other volumes will be variously priced, but it is safe to guess that the set will cost more than $100. That's a lot of money out of any preacher's salary. Undoubtedly, your preacher will want to have this commentary in his library. We can say this with assurance because your pastor would not be a Pulpit subscriber unless he wanted to keep up-to-date in the field of preaching. He will recognize that with the issuance of this new commentary all of his other references become dated. But the rising cost of living (incidentally, be sure to read the lead article in this issue of The Pulpit), may make him feel he cannot afford to purchase this new commentary.

Actually, ministers ought not to be expected to provide their own tools. Many progressive congregations now make provision for the purchase of professional books and magazines for their pastors. (Feel free to write us if you need any suggestions along that line.) If yours is not one of those congregations, the advent of The Interpreter's Bible gives you just the excuse you needed to get your official board to take this important step. Why not confer with your pastor and find out his average annual expenditure for professional tools? If it is less than $150 it is not enough. That should be the minimum figure in any church's budget for this purpose.

Think this over and let us hear from you if we can help you further.

Sincerely,

Garland Evans Hopkins

Managing Editor, The Pulpit

ROUNDUP

THE DRIFT OF WESTERN THOUGHT. By **Carl F. H. Henry.** Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich. $2.50. This book is not light reading. It is fundamentalism at its scholarly best. As one might expect, it bears the usual twofold heresy of the fundamentalists: (1) an oversimplification of the religious alternative—"Biblical theology or naturalistic nihilism"; (2) a tendency to divorce scholarship from religion. The author has an amazingly good grasp of the world's philosophies, but his religious faith, which is not wholly unacceptable to the empirical Christian, is left dangling from the same old presuppositions, three of which are: (a) Christianity must be a supernaturalism. The alternative is a degraded naturalism like Marxism. (b) Supernaturalism must have its basis in "special divine revelation, i.e., of the biblical miraculous." (c) There is a unified "biblical theology" provided by "the speaking God, who has not stuttered in his speech." The author makes a profound appeal for a return to the absolutism of revealed truth and will captivate many people who no longer can live adventurously with probabilities.—*Virgil A. Kraft, Methodist Chaplain at the University of Chicago.*

WITH CHRIST IN THE MOUNT. By **Edward H. Boyce.** Exposition Press, $2.00. Seven sermons in the standard fundamentalist pattern. Not an exposition of the Sermon on the Mount, as the title would lead one to expect. Filled with biblical literalism and such ideas as that Solomon wrote the book of Proverbs and in it told about Christ.—*C. Willard Fetter, First E.U.B., Akron, Ohio.*

THE DOCTRINE OF OUR SALVATION. By **Paul Stevens Kramer.** Exposition Press, $3.00. The author intends this to be an introduction to the theology of the atonement from the Anglican point of view and with the members of this communion in mind as the principal readers. He deals successively with numerous dogmas relevant to the main theme, including original sin, salvation, the church, grace, the sacraments, and a final chapter on "Absolution —Holy Orders—Unction of the Sick." A clear thread of historical objectivity runs through all the chapters. Where pertinent he sets forth the positions held by Roman Catholics, European and Anglo-Saxon Protestants, and then the Anglican position. One is impressed that this book will have high value in Anglican reading circles for many years to come.—*Stiles Lessly, First Congregational, De Kalb, Ill.*

REBUILDING RURAL AMERICA. By **Earle Hitch.** Harper, $3.50. This book, dedicated to "country preachers," recognizes the significant role the rural churches are playing in bringing new life to communities. Basic to a strong rural community, the author holds, is solution of the problem of employing rural people in their home communities. Two methods by which this problem has been met are: projects of demonstration like Penn-Craft in Fayette county, Pennsylvania, and projects of education like Pittman Community Center in Sevier county, Tennessee. The book surveys many such projects, and closes with the conviction that rural health centers, the country church movement, and decentralization are bringing a brighter day to many rural communities.—*John V. Murray. Jr., Ridgeville Methodist Charge, Ridgeville, S. C.*

(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No star, depends on your taste and need.)

Books Preachers Are Reading

September	October	This Month	An analysis based on reports from leading religious book sellers and from the reading of The Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers.
		1	**The Life We Prize.** *Elton Trueblood. Harper,* $2.50
1	1	2	**Communism, Democracy and Catholic Power.** *Paul Blanchard. Beacon Press,* $3.50
4	8	3	**Strengthening the Spiritual Life.** *Nels Ferre. Harper,* $1.00
	5	4	**Basic Christian Ethics.** *Paul Ramsey. Scribners,* $3.75
5	6	5	**Wake Up or Blow Up.** *Frank C. Laubach. Revell,* $2.00
		6	**Monday to Friday Is Not Enough.** *Frederick M. Meek. Oxford,* $3.00
		7	**Protestant Thought in the Twentieth Century.** *Arnold S. Nash. Macmillan,* $3.75
		8	**A Few Buttons Missing.** *J. T. Fisher. Lippincott,* $3.50
5	4	9	**Here I Stand.** *Roland Bainton. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $4.75
10	9	10	**Life of Jesus.** *Edgar J. Goodspeed. Harper,* $3.00

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

WHILE people seem to be slowly waking up to the low state of morals in public life and to the organized criminality which pervades the whole social order, it is well to listen to Pope Pius XII in his forthright denunciation of the demoralizing effects of a class of books and other publications circulated under the name of "sex education." Speaking to an audience of 100 French women, the pontiff expressed his astonishment that "the secrets of marital intimacy, before which even paganism seems to halt with respect, should be violated and held up to view and laid bare, as food for the whole public and even youth itself." The Pope spoke as if he had just stopped at one of many thousands of newstands in the U.S.A. and taken a swift glance at the array of pulp magazines and cheap books of the lowest kind of sensuality that constitute their chief article of trade. But he also had in mind the books found in libraries and schools which claim respectability for their "educational" value. The idea of "sex education" has exaggerated out of all proportion the sex element in life. This literature, the movie, the theatre and the press (take one look at the theater advertisements in any metropolitan newspaper) reflects the fact of a sex-saturated generation. The churches of Protestantism have been too squeamish in dealing with this pollution of the source of public and social morality in individual character.

Pope Pius Speaks Out On Sex "Education"

The Book of the Month

THE INTERPRETER'S BIBLE, *Vol. VII, Matthew and Mark. Abingdon-Cokesbury. $8.75.*

THIS is more than the book of the month or of a year. It is the book of a generation. It marks the approaching achievement at great expense by the Methodist publishing house of a library of twelve volumes covering the whole Bible, containing the complete text of two versions (King James' and the new Revised Standard Version), critical exegesis and homiletical commentary on every passage from Genesis to Revelation! The scholarship and the preaching art which have been drawn into its production represent the top authorities in the United States, Great Britain and the Continent. Dr. George A. Buttrick is the editor and the writer of the commentary on Luke, Matthew and Philemon. My limited space will allow mention only of the names of his associate editors: W. Russell Bowie, John Knox, Paul Scherer, Samuel Terrien and Nolan B. Harmon —these together with thirty-six consulting editors and 124 contributors—the cream of contemporary biblical, theological, historical and homiletical scholarship—give an impression of the monumental character of the work. The present volume will be followed by the others, one every six months, until publication is complete. You should write the publishers—Nashville or New York—for information as to price of the whole set and terms of payment. You and I will be using these books every week for the rest of our lives.

A Thought for the Month

HAS not the time come for the churches to re-examine their social ideals? Great changes have taken place since those ideals were first formulated a generation ago. Yet the churches follow a social action leadership which thinks in essentially the same patterns that were formed when the "social gospel" first touched the conscience of American Protestantism. In that period, we could think of no cure for the evils incident to the free enterprise system except a system of government administration. The U.S.A. has now moved far in that direction and many believe the goal of this trend will be a socialist society. Is socialism a Christian ideal? In that period, also, the churches gave their ardent support to the developing labor union movement. Today, the union has become the most powerful bloc in our democracy and, under its autocratic leaders, wields its power in a manner that suggests an ultimate dictatorship of the proletariat. Internationally, the churches have been at the front in supporting the League of Nations, the outlawry of war, the United Nations and world government. Has the experience with these idealistic undertakings brought the expected assurance that, in a crisis, the nations would subordinate their national interest to their plighted support of collective security? Again, the churches have always cherished the early ideal of America as an asylum for the peoples of Europe. As the result of this immigration idealism, we now have a heterogenous population existing in huge colonial blocs, inviting political demagoguery, and creating for democratic government the most difficult situation confronted by democracy anywhere in the world. Were the churches under any ethical obligation to add thousands of displaced persons to the list of immigrants? These and many questions from other fields legitimately arise concerning our social ideals. Is it not time to give them a searching re-examination?

A Time to Re-examine Our Social Ideals

Charles Clayton Morrison

Advisory Ballot

(Each year the Christian Century Foundation elects representative outstanding preachers to serve as editorial associates of The Pulpit. Readers are asked to use this ballot or to write letters nominating for 1952 those they believe to be America's most effective preachers. — The Christian Century Foundation.)

I.

(To be used if the reader desires to continue the present editorial associates.)

☐ **I nominate to succeed themselves the present editorial associates of The Pulpit.**

II.

(To be used if the reader prefers to vote for others than the present editorial associates.)

Please check the names of those you nominate for reelection. Write in the names of nominees other than present editorial associates. Some statement of such nominees' qualifications should accompany the ballot.

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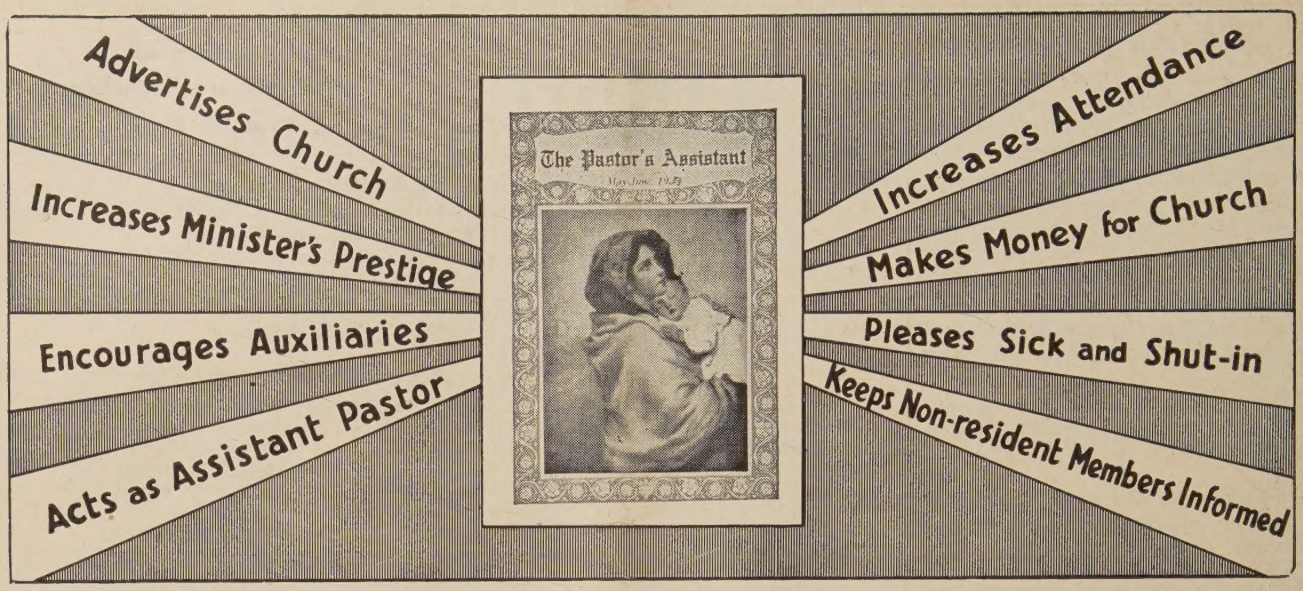

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